No. 1228
23 January –
5 Feb. 2009
£1.50

PRIVATE EYE

OBAMA TAKES OVER

SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION OFFER!

3 ISSUES FREE

when you subscribe to

PRIVATE EYE

SUBSCRIBE NOW AND SAVE OVER £11!

PLUS we'll give you an EXTRA 3 ISSUES FREE – extending your subscription for an extra six weeks at no extra cost!

Treat yourself or a friend to a PRIVATE EYE SUBSCRIPTION and SAVE over 28%

REPLY WITHIN 7 DAYS FOR YOUR FREE ISSUES

Order the easy way at www.subsonline.co.uk

or call our credit card hotline on 01795 414 870 Quote code: N1228

Subscription order form

☐ Yes! I would like to subscribe to PRIVATE EYE for 26 ISSUES and receive an EXTRA 3 ISSUES FREE

UK £28 Europe (Airmail) £34 Rest of World (Airmail) £38

❶ Your details: (for gift subscriptions – this is where we send the gift card)

Title Initial Surname

Address

Postcode Mobile/tel. no.

Email

DON'T MISS OUT. WE SEND OUR BEST RENEWAL OFFERS BY EMAIL. PRIVATE EYE is serious about protecting your privacy. We do not share or sell data about our subscribers.

❷ Gift subscription. Please send Private Eye to:

Title Initial Surname

Address

Postcode Tel. no.

❸ Payment details:

by Direct Debit – annually – please fill in the form opposite

by cheque made payable to PRIVATE EYE

by credit card. Please debit my Visa Mastercard Switch

Card number:

Valid from Expiry date Switch issue no

Cardholder's signature Date

OFFER CLOSES 2 MARCH 2009. You may cancel at any time and receive a full refund on outstanding issues.

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

DIRECT Debit

Originator's reference 768299

Subscriber ref. no. (to be completed by PRIVATE EYE)

PEYE

To the Manager (Bank/Building Society name):

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Signature(s)

Date

Branch sort code

Account number

Banks and Building Societies may not accept Direct Debit instructions from some types of account.

Instructions to your Bank or Building Society: Please pay PRIVATE EYE Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with PRIVATE EYE and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

HOW TO ORDER:

Visit www.subsonline.co.uk

Call our order hotline 01795 414 870
(Mon to Fri 8.30am-8.00pm, Sat 9.00am-1.00pm)

Complete the order form and send with payment to:
PRIVATE EYE, PO Box 326, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8FA

SOURCE CODE: N1228

Gnome

ROYAL BANK OF GNOME

WE WELCOME the government's decision to make a further contribution to the "Save the Banks" national appeal. As readers are aware, banks perform an invaluable service in refusing to lend money to ordinary people in need. That is why you the taxpayer *must* give us a further £1 trillion to enable us to lend you back the money in order to spend your way into more debt. *(Is this right? Ed)*

This might not sound a very clever idea to you the layman, but rest assured we here at the Royal Bank of Gnome have years of experience working in the complex world of international finance and we are confident that the new £1 trillion bail out will tide us over for at least two weeks thus giving us time to shred all the incriminating documentation about toxic loans and book our flights to the Cayman Islands.

Yours
Lord Gnome
The Royal Bank of Gnome
Shitpaddle Street
London EC94

"No, you can't borrow your money"

EDITORIAL
6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN.
Tel: 020 7437 4017. Fax: 020 7437 0705.
Email: strobes@private-eye.co.uk
Website: www.private-eye.co.uk

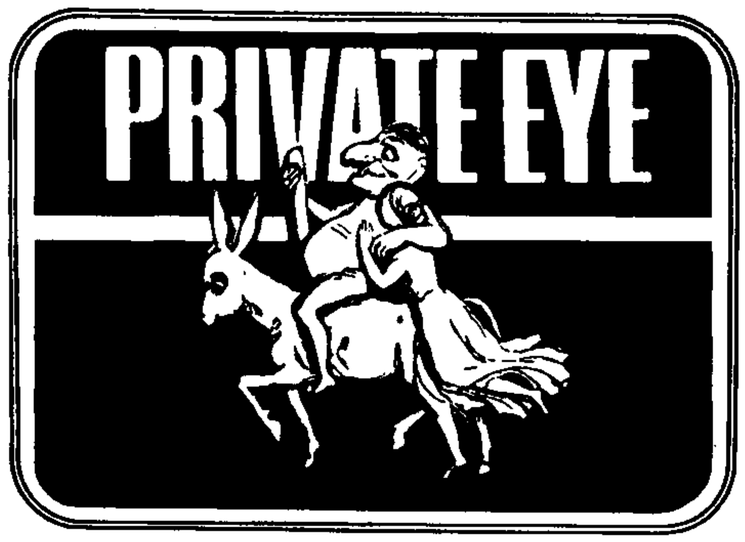
PRIVATE EYE SUBSCRIPTIONS/SALES
PO Box 326, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8FA.
Subscription enquiries: 01795 414 871
Overseas: +44 (0) 1795 414 870 Fax: 01795 414 555.
Web: www.subsonline.co.uk
Email: private-eye@servicehelpline.co.uk

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
£28 per annum. Europe and Eire £34. Airmail (rest of world) £38.
Cheques/POs to Private Eye. Mastercard/Visa.

ADVERTISING
Ten Alps Publishing, 9 Savoy Street, London WC2E 7HR.
Email: private-eye@tenalpspublishing.com
Display: 020 7878 2366 **Classified:** 020 7240 9129

Published by Pressdram Ltd, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN. **Printed** by BGP Ltd, Bicester OX6 7QZ.
Distributed by COMAG Tavistock Road, West Drayton, Middlesex, UB7 7QE. Tel 01895 433600.

ABC



You can bank on us

■ **Oligarch latest: Street of Shameski** 5
■ **More complete balls at *Telegraph* sport** 6
■ **Revolving Doors & a ministerial job shop** 6
■ **All aboard the Heathrow ghost train** 10
■ **Recession watch: Green suits of recovery** 28
■ **Floods; forests; extradition & more** 29

GORDON BROWN's latest "goat" – Mervyn Davies, who joins the PM's Government Of All the Talents as trade minister – comes from a bank that worked terribly hard to befriend Labour.

While Davies served on some of Gordon's pet commissions, Standard Chartered, where he was chairman and chief executive until Brown made him a lord and minister, also reached out to Labour. In 2006 it hired Foreign Office minister Baroness Symons as a consultant; and it was a "corporate partner" of Tony Blair's "Business Action for Africa" group.

Standard Chartered's interest in Labour's foreign policy may stem from its own extensive foreign interests. It makes most of its profits in Africa and Asia, reflecting its history as a funder of the British Empire.

Davies, meanwhile, is praised because his bank fared better than others in the credit crunch and did not burn up money on sub-prime loans and their exotic derivatives. However, this probably reflects Standard Chartered's longstanding focus on emerging markets in the developing world rather than any particular wisdom on the part of Davies, who is also an adviser to Corsair Capital.

This American investment company jumped headfirst into the sub-prime pool. It invested almost $1bn to become majority owner of National City bank, an American institution born in 1845 but which died this year, killed off by its massive expansion into toxic loans. Corsair also owns CompuCredit, a US sub-prime credit card company which was fined $113m in December for misleading its low paid borrowers and is reporting big losses of earnings.

WITH the government set to become majority shareholder in RBS and probably Lloyds TSB/HBOS, not to mention Northern Rock and Bradford & Bingley, the latest financial rescue package means that British taxpayers will now own a number of investment banking, private banking and tax avoidance businesses.

While the public gets lumbered with the toxic waste of rampant financial liberalisation, however, some businesses are going the other way and heading for private hands. These aren't infected greed machines but rather more useful services such as part of the Post Office, training for defence personnel (*Eyes passim*) and schools and hospitals under the private finance initiative.

And that's not all. Put up for "alternatives to public ownership" by chancellor Alistair Darling in his November pre-budget statement were British Waterways, the Royal Mint, Ordinance Survey, the Land Registry and the Met Office.

Their sales are planned in the name of efficiency, which was the same reason given for the 2001 sale of Britain's tax offices to a tax haven company, Mapeley – as exposed in the *Eye*. This was such a brilliant idea that, despite taking more from the taxpayer than it said it would, Mapeley has just had to beg for £60m from shareholders. Without this it will go bust in weeks, with the tax offices taken over by its banker. Funnily enough this happens to be HBOS, likely soon to be publicly controlled. That's one way at least for the taxpayer to get its tax offices back!

FORMER Labour minister Alan Milburn's brief as a government adviser on social mobility is to improve access for children from poorer backgrounds to the law, medicine and the media. But there is one kind of social mobility on which he will probably keep his mouth shut.

In a 2003 lecture shortly after leaving the cabinet, the former ultra-Blairite called for a massive expansion of home ownership. "More flexible forms of borrowing could be developed with mortgage lenders," he said. "To date, they have been overly cautious in promoting packages aimed at lower-income households."

The key was to take a leaf out of the American book, he opined. "We are just scratching the surface. You only have to look across the Atlantic to see what could be done. US government-sponsored enterprise companies have helped 58m low- and moderate-income families buy their own homes."

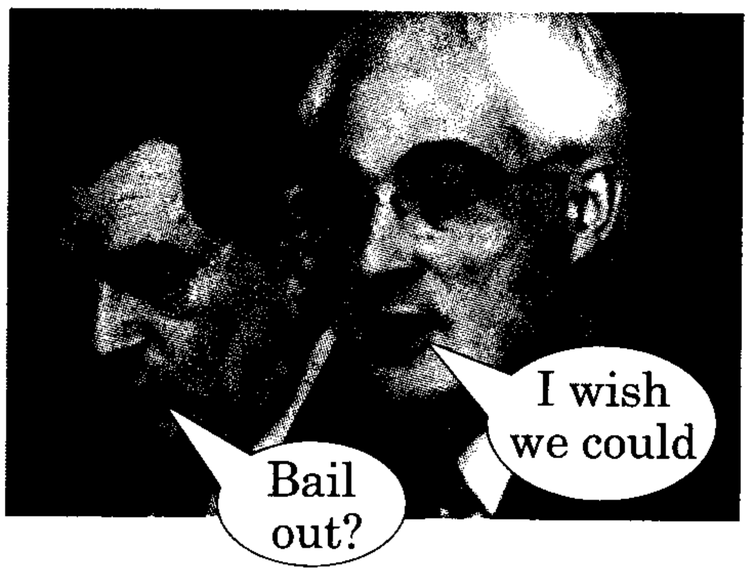
A few years later and the idea seems about as overly cautious as the banks that made the loans. And many Britons are getting used to the idea that the only social mobility they are likely to see is downwards to the dole queue as they wait for the knock on the door from the bailiff.

Wise judge

IN CASE readers might be interested, we wish to record that *Private Eye* has been in court in recent days, spending large amounts of time and money resisting an injunction issued against the magazine to prevent us running a story.

We won the case, the judge refused the injunction and awarded costs to us; but the other side immediately appealed, which means we *still* can't publish the story or indeed anything about the successful legal proceedings.

So… er… watch this space. Possibly.



NUMBER CRUNCHING

£28bn Biggest loss in UK corporate history suffered last year by Royal Bank of Scotland

£2.8m Bonus paid to Sir Fred Goodwin in his last year in charge of Royal Bank of Scotland

Street of Shame

Q: When is the elderly star of a well-loved 70s sitcom fair play for prurient comment?

A: When it's the *Daily Mail* that's invading his privacy!

As the paper continued to milk the story of Jonathan Ross's phone-calls to Andrew Sachs in the run-up to his return to the air, it took time out to print a series of long-lens photographs (courtesy of Matrix, one of the paparazzi agencies the paper swore it would never use again following the death of Princess Diana) of Richard O'Sullivan, the 64-year old actor best known for his role in *Man About The House*.

"He looked frail as he took a walk near the retirement home where he lives," the paper noted on 6 January. "More than 30 years ago he was a sex symbol… He was said to have lived the life of a virtual recluse with his son in a two-bedroom London flat." So pleased was the *Mail* with its "man looks older after thirty-five years" scoop that it tracked down one of O'Sullivan's former girlfriends a few days later to ask her for details of their relationship and how she felt about the fact that "his film star good looks have faded rapidly".

And what of that other star of 70s TV, *Columbo*'s Peter Falk? In *Eye* 1224 we noted the *Mail*'s use of paparazzi shots of the 81-year-old in a state of distress. Since then two things have happened: Falk's family have confirmed he is suffering from Alzheimer's, and the photos in question have disappeared from the *Daily Mail* website, with visitors being informed that "the page you have requested does not exist or is no longer available".

FEW newspaper editors have been more supportive of a third runway at Heathrow than thirsty Will Lewis of the *Daily Telegraph*.

Ignoring the natural scepticism of his readers (who regard airports as nasty, polluting things), ex-City hack Lewis has been much impressed by arguments from his lunching chums in the business world. Accordingly, the *Torygraph* gave generous room on its news pages to a story about pro-runway lobbying and the following day ran a leader column – "Heathrow needs a third runway" – which chastised the government for "dithering" over the affair.

On the very same day, the *Telegraph* website carried a pungent *attack* on the third runway which said that "adding a third runway will mean an additional 700,000 flights a year. You can see the £ signs light up in the eyes of BA and BAA of course, but it doesn't make much sense".

The piece laid into the "mind-numbing hassle" of Heathrow, calling it a "third world airport" and saying that a "third runway is not going to fix that". The author of this admirable polemic? David Hughes, whose day job is, er, writing the leader articles at the *Daily Telegraph*.

Given Lewis's notorious distaste for dissent, can it be long before the hapless Hughes is found bundled up in a packing case at Terminal Four?

***GUARDIAN* columnists from Simon Jenkins to John Harris have criticised outsourcing giant Capita for its incompetence – but they aren't the only ones.**

The paper has also reported the dangers of politicians becoming too close to outfits like Capita, as when founder Rod Aldridge caused a scandal with his secret £1m loan to the Labour party.

How embarrassed they all must feel, then, to learn that the *Guardian*'s high profile "Public Services Summit" opens next month all thanks to sponsorship from… Capita!

DESPITE ending the old year with the "ritual humiliation" of confessing he'd been wrong about everything in 2008, the *Times* economic guru Anatole Kaletsky clearly feels he hasn't suffered enough.

"I believe, in line with the vast majority of non-socialist economists, that Mr Cameron's campaign for savings is completely wrong," he wrote on 8 January. "But what I think is of little importance, especially as I have been wrong about so many aspects of this crisis."

But has he learned his lesson? Alas, no. The column he wrote for last Thursday's paper was a hymn of praise to Lord Mandelson's success in "dissuading the prime minister from his economically stupid, environmentally destructive and electorally suicidal obsession with expanding Heathrow". Gordon Brown's "well-executed U-turn" on Heathrow would bring him great popular kudos.

Late on Wednesday evening an alert sub-editor noticed that the paper's front page was leading with the headline: "Heathrow Gets Third Runway in £9bn Deal". Kaletsky's column was hastily rejigged to have Mandelson "*attempting* to dissuade" Brown but failing. On the *Times* website, however, the original Kaletsky version went unaltered – and was still celebrating the imaginary U-turn later that day when Geoff Hoon duly announced the massive expansion of Heathrow airport.

JASPER GERARD, the gormless "star writer" who has inexplicably survived several editorial purges at the *Telegraph*, has yet to outdo his faux-pas with previous employer the *Observer*, where an investigation by the paper's readers' editor concluded that it had been "wrong to allow" his "snide stereotyping" and "knee-jerk attacks on minority groups" to be printed.

But in a review of Rick Stein's Seafood Restaurant in Padstow he penned for the *Telegraph*'s website on 14 January, he had a damn good try.

"It is not quite Palestine, but 'Padstein' can also be pretty dangerous – and not merely due to the constant shelling we face with the *fruits de mer*," he guffawed on the day the death toll in Gaza passed 1,000.

"It might be a struggle to scale the security wall, but once inside Stein's occupied territory you want to remain, wallowing in the old-fashioned elegance of this light, white space… As so often when leaving a war zone, you reflect that both sides in the dispute have atrocities to answer for."

IN THE past few months the *Daily Mirror* has cut its news desk from six to four staff and dispensed with the services of a foreign editor, a deputy news editor, an assistant news editor and a forward planner to save money.

It did, however, find £20,000 to give to professional celebrity Jade Goody for the latest in her series of exclusive interviews about her cancer, published on 12 January.

NUMBER CRUNCHING

£20,000 Amount paid by the Daily Mirror for exclusive interview with Jade Goody and pictures of her in headscarf following chemotherapy last week

£80,000 Amount paid by the News of the World for exclusive interview with Jade Goody and pictures of her without headscarf following chemotherapy last week

HOW EXTREMISM WORKS

"EXTREMIST threat to UK Jews," screamed the *Sun*'s front page on 7 January, above the exclusive story of a "hate hit list" of British Jews feared to be targeted by Islamic extremists seeking revenge for Israel's invasion of Gaza.

The story cited postings made to online Muslim forum ummah.com on which "Abuislam" asked: "Have we got a list of top Jews we can target? Can someone post names and addresses?"

The *Sun*'s "anti-terror expert", Glen Jenvey, warned his readers: "Those listed should treat it very seriously. Expect a hate campaign and intimidation by 20 or 30 thugs."

But where did the thugs come from? One member of the ummah.com forum had suggested collecting names of Israel's supporters "so that we can write polite letters". And when Abuislam asked for "top Jews we can target", the same member advised against direct action: "The best thing to do is not to contact them directly. But identify a Muslim organisation who works in that field or in that area and convince them to act to marganilze [*sic*] the zionists' activity."

"Abuislam" was having none of it, however: "Polite will not work. Target them with Demo's out-side their Home's and Business hit and run demo's showing and exposing their war crimes in their support," he wrote.

So who is this "Abuislam" who wants to run a hate campaign against "Siralan" Sugar and co? Suspicion was roused by ummah's administrators when their system detected that his account had been accessed using the same computer as another user by the name of Richard Tims. A glance over Mr Tims' history on the site revealed that he only posted on the forum to promote a website – the now defunct www.sellyourstory.org – offering cash for Islamic stories "wanted by the media worldwide".

And who was listed as the contact for sellyourstory? Step forward… Glen Jenvey, the *Sun*'s terror expert.

The story has since been removed from the *Sun*'s website, and the PCC is investigating a number of complaints.

HAPPY times at the *Financial Times*, where 20 hacks have been made redundant – only half of them by choice. Meanwhile, those lucky enough to survive are being told that it would be awfully decent of them to volunteer to do their work in four or even three days rather than the usual five – with a pro-rata pay-cut, of course, and knock-on effects on their pension.

FT hacks suggested that in such straitened times, it might be nice of management to forgo their bonuses this year. For decency's sake the bigwigs kicked the proposal around for a day or two before announcing, with furrowed brows and moist eyes, that it was alas out of the question because the acceptance of bonuses is nothing less than "a contractual obligation".

THE circulation of the *People* may be plummeting, but that doesn't stop the paper railing against incompetence and mismanagement elsewhere: its editorial last weekend blamed all the economy's ills on "fat-headed" bankers.

No doubt this was duly noted by the board of Trinity Mirror, owner of the *People*, which includes chairman Sir Ian Gibson (non-executive director of Northern Rock until last year), Gary Hoffmann (current chief executive of Northern Rock and former vice-chairman of Barclays) and Kathleen O'Donovan (former director of the court of the Bank of England). Trinity Mirror's fat-headed credentials don't stop there – Gibson's predecessor as *Mirror* chairman until 2006 was veteran banker Sir Victor Blank, now chairman of Lloyds TSB.

WHY DID the *Daily Telegraph* commission Andrew Pierce to do over *Indie* proprietor Tony O'Reilly after the collapse of the Irish tycoon's Waterford Wedgwood china and ceramics company?

Although usually reluctant to report on media moguls, the *Telegraph* cleared a full-page for the hatchet-job: "The Celtic tiger is reduced to pussycat, but how much more of Sir Anthony O'Reilly's business empire is on the brink of collapse?"

Partly this is revenge for a devastating attack on the *Telegraph* just before Christmas by the *Indie*'s media pundit Stephen Glover, a column which his craven bosses have now pulled from the *Indie*'s website for fear of libel writs from the weirdo Barclay twins.

But there is another reason. Having sacked dozens of hacks and outsourced many sub-editing duties to a firm in Australia (which charges a mere £45 a page), the *Telegraph* has plenty of spare room at its office in Victoria these days. Last autumn it held talks about renting out some of this space to the *Indie* – but at the last minute, to the *Telegraph*'s fury, O'Reilly's boxwallahs chose to shack up with the *Mail* instead.

SINCE the *Independent* is having to sack 60 editorial staff and relocate to new offices in a desperate bid to survive, hacks wondered if their managing director Simon Kelner, the former editor who still retains the title of editor-in-chief, might be willing to make a few sacrifices too – such as his chauffeur-driven company car.

This suggestion has gone down very badly. "The managing director totally rejects the notion that this is an unnecessary expense," Kelner has told the *Indie*'s NUJ chapel, "and suggests the NUJ should not take issue with employees outside the editorial department."

Quite right too. Without a chauffeur, how would Kelner get to all those lunches with celebrities for his *GQ* restaurant column?

JOHANN HARI wrote an angry column in the *Indie* last week about "how corrosive nepotism is", arguing that the surest way of wrecking a business is for bosses to give jobs to their relations or the children of their friends.

It's morally wrong, too, debarring millions of people of greater merit who don't have the right connections. "This is why you see the same surnames endlessly cropping up in British public life, dripping with mediocrity."

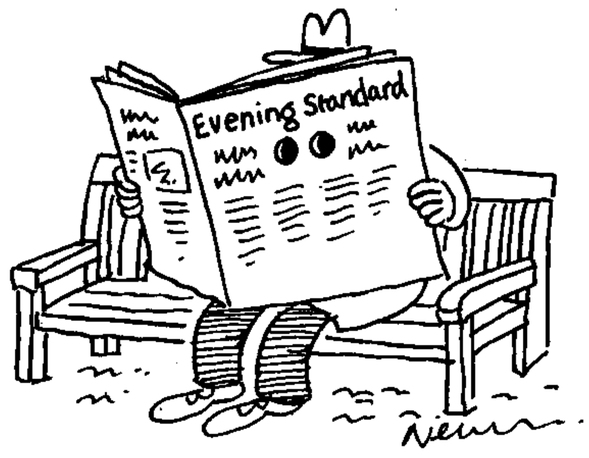
No doubt this was read with interest by the chief operating officer of Independent News & Media (INM), Gavin O'Reilly, who happens to be the son of the company's boss Tony O'Reilly. And by the *Indie*'s managing director Simon Kelner, who as editor-in-chief plucked his nephew Adam Leigh from a lowly subbing job on the *Birmingham Post* and fast-tracked him to the news editorship of the *Sindie* and then the *Indie*. And by INM's chief executive in the UK, Ivan Fallon, whose niece Annabel Fallon – a former work-experience hackette – was recruited to the reporting staff of the *Sindie* in 2003.

THE MOGUL, THE DIGGER, THE PR MAN AND THE OLD ETONIAN

THE *Guardian* seems bemused by its discovery that Russian billionaire Alexander Lebedev was negotiating to buy the London *Evening Standard*. "Why would a Russian want to buy a British newspaper – particularly one in the middle of a fierce circulation war?" the *Grauniad* media pundit Steve Busfield wonders. "That, of course, is THE question," says an equally puzzled Roy Greenslade.

Allow Lord Gnome to explain. The man who lured Lebedev into the scheme was Geordie Greig, the Old Etonian editor of *Tatler*, abetted by PR smoothie Matthew Freud, the Dirty Digger's son-in-law. Both have strong personal motives for wanting a change of ownership.

Since missing out on the *Spectator* when Boris Johnson resigned, Greig has set his heart on editing the *Standard*. But the dream was unlikely to be fulfilled while the *Standard* was owned by Daily Mail and General Trust (DMGT). What he needed was a rich friend who would buy the paper and install him in Veronica Wadley's chair.



Step forward Lebedev, who has been very thick with Greig since footing the £1m bill for "the Geordie and Gorby show", an extravagant summer ball which the *Tatler* editor and Mikhail Gorbachev co-hosted at Althorp in 2006 on behalf of the Raisa Gorbachev Foundation, a children's charity. "The generosity of the Lebedev family in underwriting this event is extraordinary," Geordie gushed in a *Spectator* diary at the time. He is also a friend of the mogul's London-based son Evgeny Lebedev, chairman of the foundation, with whom he co-hosted two more charity balls in 2007 and 2008 – and whom he wisely included in *Tatler*'s list of most eligible bachelors.

Matthew Freud, meanwhile, has been smarting over Johnson's decision to terminate a contract negotiated by Ken Livingstone under which the London mayor paid Freud Communications £108,000 a year for PR advice. Freud's allegiances were apparent in the guest list for his celeb-packed Christmas party last month: Ken was invited, Boris not. Like most of Ken's admirers, Freud holds the *Standard* largely responsible for Boris's victory. But Livingstone could win back the mayoralty next time if the paper were under new and more sympathetic management. As the *Guardian* reported, after a briefing from Freud, "the *Standard* could take a softer and perhaps more progressive line". Who knows, Ken might even re-hire Freud Communcations.

Greig and Freud thought they had it in the bag. Paul Dacre, for whom the *Standard* has become something of an albatross, gave his blessing and flew off to the Virgin Islands on holiday. All they required was the approval of Lord Rothermere – and since his wife sits on the committee of the Raisa Gorbachev Foundation they assumed this would be a doddle. Alas! It turned out that the *Evening Standard* is Lady Rothermere's favourite title in her husband's empire, and she begged him not to part with it.

But Claudia Rothermere's objections were overruled by the company's new chief executive Martin Morgan, a man who has no sentimental feelings about newspapers (or indeed much apparent interest in them). Lebedev was invited to resume negotiations.

If Lebedev bought the *Standard*, the biggest beneficiary would be Freud's dear father-in-law Rupert, who is losing about £20m a year on his freesheet *thelondonpaper*. Or so Freud thought, assuming that DMGT's rival *London Lite* (which loses £10m a year) would be axed when Lebedev took over.

Actually it wasn't quite so simple, since the ownership of *London Lite* had just been quietly transferred from the *Standard* to another division of Associated Newspapers. One reason for the delay in announcing a deal last week was the haggling over what should become of it. DMGT wanted to "fold" *London Lite* into its morning freesheet *Metro*, which has exclusive distribution rights inside Tube stations – under a contract which is up for renewal this year and which Livingstone would have ended. It would thus create *Metro AM* and *Metro PM*. Lebedev's representatives jibbed at this, rightly fearing that an afternoon *Metro* would damage the *Standard* as severely as the morning *Metro* has damaged the *Sun* in London.

So what did Lebedev get out of the deal? No profit, of course, but he and his son would have the social and political kudos that comes from owning an important newspaper in the capital. And he'd have the pleasure of making his friend Geordie Greig a happy boy. Despite the credit crunch, Lebedev is still one of the richest men in Russia and well able to afford such generous gestures.

He has been repaid with the most astonishingly drooling coverage seen since the election of President Obama. For the past week Freud has been spinning away like a whirling dervish on Lebedev's behalf, and hacks have duly profiled Lebedev as a fearless critic of Putin, a patron of the arts and all-round good guy – "a people's billionaire", as the *Times* put it. Even his KGB past has somehow become charming rather than sinister.

But the man with most potential cause for rejoicing is Rupert Murdoch. Associated Newspapers, in the London freebies war, committed the same mistake Conrad Black made when he dragged the *Telegraph* into a price war with the *Times*: they thought they could outspend him. By forcing Rothermere to consider the sale of the *Standard* and negotiate, even against his wife's wishes, the News Corp boss has once again demonstrated that no one, but no one, has deeper pockets than the Digger.

HAS the intrepid Anil Bhoyrul lost his knack of getting decent inside information? The insider dealing scandal involving *Mirror* City hacks Bhoyrul and James Hipwell infamously landed their boss Piers "Morgan" Moron in hot water, but Bhoyrul's sources in his latest role, at Middle East newspaper *Arabian Business*, appear rather less reliable if his scoops on Manchester City's feverish pursuit of AC Milan's Kaka are anything to go by.

"Manchester City has withdrawn its world record $150m bid to sign Brazilian superstar Kaka, according to a senior source close to the club's owners," Bhoyrul gleefully revealed on Thursday 15 January. "The well-placed source, speaking on the condition of anonymity, told *Arabian Business*: 'The deal is off, and the offer is no longer on the table.'"

Within a few hours, however, Manchester City had insisted that the mind-boggling offer was very much still on the (presumably reinforced) table. Undeterred, Bhoyrul followed up with the revelation the following day that Kaka was demanding a huge pay rise to join City, adding: "Sources close to the club owners on Friday told *Arabian Business* that the $150m deal to bring Kaka to Eastlands from Italian giants AC Milan was now 'likely' and the owners are hoping to parade their new signing on Sunday."

Sunday came and went, but alas there was no parade.

HACKWATCH

Own Goals And Golden Ducks

WHEN executive editor Mark "Skippy" Skipworth arrived from the *Sunday Times* last year to shake up the sports desks of both Telegraph titles, editor Will "Thirsty" Lewis boasted that "he has a wealth of experience and I know he will do a great job of building on our fantastic reputation for sports coverage".

Sunday Telegraph sports editor Jon Ryan was shown the door soon afterwards, while old hands who believed in checking their stories were replaced by hungry young newshounds who could deliver front-page exclusives. Alas, very few have stood up to scrutiny:

13 July 2008: Big news in the football world: Arsenal's Emmanuel Adebayor is "close to sealing" a transfer to AC Milan. "It is expected that Milan will give Adebayor a five-year deal depending on the transfer fee, which Arsenal are prepared to drop from their initial £30m asking price to £24m," writes Andrew Warshaw. No deal takes place; the player stays with Arsenal.

3 August: "Decision day for Ronaldo future." According to Duncan White, just installed as chief football correspondent, "Cristiano Ronaldo will demand to be allowed to move to Real Madrid when he returns to Old Trafford on Tuesday after the Spanish champions publicly reiterated their desire to sign the Portuguese winger. After weeks of speculation, Ronaldo will attempt to force Manchester United's hand by meeting Sir Alex Ferguson, the manager, and David Gill, the chief executive, to ask to be allowed to move to the Bernabeu." Later that week, Ronaldo confirms that he has no intention of leaving United.

5 October: "Tottenham ready to move for Grant as Comolli replacement." Not a million miles off the mark here. Spurs director of football Damien Comolli is dismissed, albeit three weeks later – but his job is abolished and no role offered to Avram Grant. And despite the *Telegraph*'s claim that "Spurs are set to keep faith with manager Juande Ramos" , Ramos is sacked at the same time as Comolli.

12 October: "Woodward set to quit 2012 role," the *Sunday Telegraph* sensationally reveals. "Sir Clive Woodward is ready to walk away from his £300,000-a-year job as the British Olympic Association's director of elite performance." Woodward issues a firm denial before the paper goes to press and is still in place.

30 November: "England will return to India for their two-Test series... but without several senior players," writes Scyld Berry, revealing that Andrew Flintoff and Steve Harmison "refuse to tour". Both Flintoff and Harmison are on the plane; not one player withdraws.

28 December: "Vaughan in line for recall." It's another exclusive for "Scoop" Berry. Twenty-four hours after he reports that Michael Vaughan will join England's winter tour to the West Indies, the former captain is omitted from the squad.

And what of Vaughan himself, the *Telegraph*'s star cricket columnist hired at great expense last year but whose output has until now been as moderate as his run-scoring? What did he have to say about the breakdown in relations between England cricket captain Kevin Pietersen and coach Peter Moores, a story his paper claimed to have broken (actually it was the *Mail*)? It is widely known that Vaughan raised his concerns about Moores early in 2008, when he first considered resigning. Furthermore, Pietersen had taken time out to consult Vaughan over dinner in the Caribbean after England were humiliated in the Stanford Twenty20 final. But what did readers hear of this? Nary a word!

REVOLVING DOORS

A MARATHON parliamentary inquiry concluded this month with some tough suggestions for regulating well-connected lobbyists and beefing up the policing of ministers and civil servants stepping into the revolving door between government and the businesses whose interests their decisions affect.

Central to the committee's deliberations were the case studies of two former ministers doing very nicely from the revolving door: Richard Caborn MP and Lord (Norman) Warner (*Eyes passim*). Summoned to explain their lucrative post-ministerial sidelines, both were irked to have their motives questioned.

Ex-trade minister Caborn insisted his £70k-a-year consultancy role with nuclear engineer Amec was "nothing to do with my ministerial career" but to help a firm based in his constituency and because of a background including an "apprentice of the year award" (ahem, nearly 50 years ago!) The committee differed, concluding that his claim "stretched credulity".

Not that Caborn cares too much. As he prepares to sit out the last year or two of life as an MP before likely ennoblement, he can console himself with a recently-awarded directorship of Nuclear Management Partners, Amec's joint venture with France's Areva which last year won the Sellafield decommissioning contract.

Former health minister Warner (seven post-ministerial jobs including health and IT companies) remains unabashed. Announcing his interests last month as he argued in parliament for policies that favour his employers, such as more choice in healthcare and ploughing on with the disastrous national IT programme he ran as minister, Warner admitted he was "adviser to the General Healthcare Group, Perot Systems and Byotrol, all of which have healthcare interests". Lest any cynic should think that might detract from the objectivity of his speech, Warner immediately added: "So I am reasonably in touch with the current healthcare scene." Indeed.

PS: Latest juicy job for an ex-cabinet minister is John Reid's £45,000 to £50,000 consultancy position with G4S, formerly Group 4. Two years ago as home secretary Reid announced two new PFI prisons, one of which would be at Maghull, Merseyside, and a new "Belmarsh West" jail. And guess who is currently lining up to run them? Yep, G4S.

PPS: The tills are also ringing for Baroness Amos, former international development spokeswoman in the Lords, foreign office minister and, for a few months in 2003, International Development Secretary. Over this time she supported the conversion of CDC, formerly the Commonwealth Development Corporation, into a private equity operation. Recently CDC put money into a fund run by Nigerian private equity firm Travant which, its website says, will be 70 percent "invested in pure growth plays". Soon after leaving the government she took a directorship with Travant Capital, salary undisclosed.

NUMBER CRUNCHING

1,000 Job losses announced by employers in Manchester in last week

£100m Transfer fee offered for Kaka by Manchester City last week

FOI'D AGAIN

IF Gordon Brown wants to save money, he could start by pruning the mad bureaucracy involved in processing Freedom of Information requests.

Over four months officials at the Ministry of Defence sent 185 emails, memos and letters in connection with an FOI request for a 10-year-old report on one of its nuclear submarine contractors, it has emerged.

Rather than processing the request, civil servants spent their time digging up background information and "interesting insights" on the *Eye* contributor who had submitted it. They also decided to "consult" with all 12 companies mentioned in the report, even though, as one civil servant put it, "the vast majority are simply mentioned in passing" – some just as sub-contactors in wiring diagrams. The process was so Byzantine even one of those involved complained that it had become "lengthy and bureaucratic".

We know all this only thanks to a *second* FOI request about the handling of the first. For two years, the MoD refused to reveal any detail and only relented after the Information Commissioner investigated.

CHEEK BY JOWELL

OLYMPICS minister Tessa Jowell was "delighted" to announce David Fison's appointment to the Olympic Delivery Board because his "vast experience of the construction industry" will help her build the sites for the 2012 games. Really?

Fison was the British head of Skanska, the Swedish builder, until last July when he felt obliged to resign after a private finance initiative cock-up.

Under Fison Skanska had overvalued three PFI schemes by £20m to £30m. This prompted Skanska's Swedish boss to promise that the company would "improve the way projects are managed and valued. And to lead this change process we think there is a need for a new leader for Skanska UK. David Fison shares this view and has decided to leave his position."

Eschewing the opportunity to cut the bloated pubic sector, he is seeking instead to entice consumers into the shops before Christmas with his VAT cuts.

Daily Mail

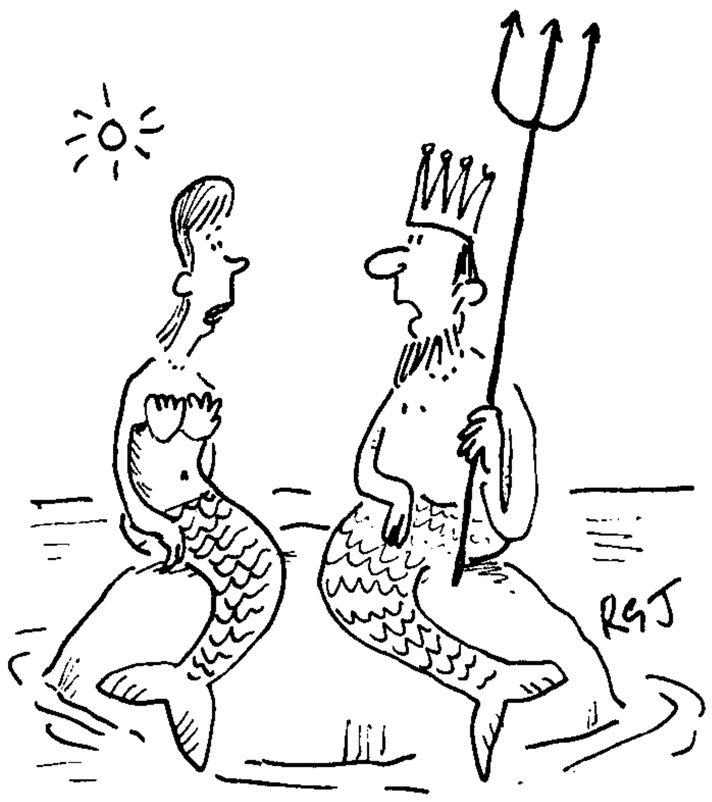
GARDEN PESTS

"GARDEN grabbing" – the practice by which housing developments spring up in people's back gardens – has been a hot campaign issue for the Tories for some time. Last year, party chair Caroline Spelman described it as "disastrous" for the quality of life of neighbours.

But the message doesn't seem to have reached Penzance, where Cornish Conservatives have flogged off the back garden of their local association HQ to… housing developers!

The building is in a residential conservation area. But that didn't stop the party bidding for planning permission in 2007 to put six flats in the space. When that fell through it sold the land to developers for £60,000. The developers have now applied to build a new home there.

"There's always one"



"To be honest, Trident's not much of a deterrent... I have it more for show"

LONDON CALLING

LONDON mayor Boris Johnson broke with Tory tradition and caught out Labour minister Ed Balls last year by supporting the "London Living Wage", a £7.45-an-hour minimum rate.

Balls issued a statement in November condemning the Living Wage, which is £1.72 higher than the national minimum wage. He then shamefacedly decided that he did back the rate, blaming his earlier statement on civil servants.

However, while Johnson made capital in the capital by backing the pay rate, he is now presiding over the sacking and discipline of union reps who actually won the money for themselves and their fellow low-paid cleaners.

Last year Tube cleaners persuaded employers to up pay from the national minimum wage to more than £7 an hour through a series of strikes. This year Clara Osagiede and Mary Boayke, the RMT union secretary for the cleaners and one of her reps, were called to disciplinary hearings, which their union sees as revenge for their victory. After demonstrations and representations, Tube cleaning bosses dropped charges against Osagiede but sacked Boayke.

The charges against Boayke show the kind of management they face. Tube cleaners are locked into the trains they clean in the depots, and must wait to be released from the carriages when the train is clean. Boayke finished her work and, waiting to be freed from the train, sat down on a seat. Sitting down is against work rules – an offence she compounded by closing her eyes. A manager took a picture of her that was used in her hearing to say she was sleeping on the job. Alternative approaches, such as opening the carriage doors and asking if she was all right, were apparently not considered.

ISS, the multinational company that manages the cleaners, told *Private Eye* that this was not victimisation. Asked whether it was a coincidence that both women facing charges were union reps, the company said it thought Boayke "was just a cleaner" and did not know she had a union position.

The cleaners are working for Metronet, which went bust and was taken over by Transport for London, chaired by Boris Johnson. However, TfL would not discuss the cleaners, saying: "As the two members of staff are employed by ISS, you would need to take this issue up with them."

Percentage of emergency ambulances responding to a category A 999 call within eight months (all-Wales figures):

Western Mail

CALLED TO ORDURE

THE rest of the country may be shivering through a recession, but Whitehall's newest recruit was horrified by a suggestion that Quangoland magnificos should have their six-figure salaries trimmed.

Colette Bowe was appearing in front of two Commons committees in Westminster's first US-style confirmation hearings. She is perhaps best known as the Department of Trade press officer who was suspected of leaks in the Westland affair – the row which led to Michael Heseltine stomping out of Margaret Thatcher's government.

Peter Mandelson has just made the same Bowe chairman of Ofcom, the broadcasting regulator. She will be paid £200,000 for a three-day week. The confirmation hearing was jointly run by the culture and business committees; and three MPs laid into the size of Bowe's pay deal. They were understandably aggrieved after hearing that Bowe already has a juicy portfolio of outside interests, including directorships at Axa Framlington, Morgan Stanley, Electra Private Equity and London and Continental Railways. She also chairs the council at Queen Mary College. She intends to keep these outside interests and expects to give Ofcom "60 percent" of her time.

Lindsay Hoyle (Lab, Chorley), bridling at Bowe's superior, ginny tones, said: "I know you come from the City. I know you are used to big salaries. But everybody is feeling the pinch. Please reconsider the amount of salary you are taking. In the end it is only a part-time position."

Bowe came up with a perfect piece of *Yes Minister*-speak. She said: "I would not regard it as appropriate to suggest that my remuneration should be less than my predecessor." Translation: the last chairman, Lord Currie, trousered £200k a year. Why should I accept less wonga?

Given this argument, bang goes any hope of chairman Bowe managing to reduce the enormous salaries bill at Ofcom, one of the most notoriously splashy payers in the regulator world.

Nigel Evans (Con, Ribble Valley) asked Bowe: "Shouldn't this be a full-time position?" He said that the public would look at her salary and say "good grief, she's earning £200,000 for this one job!" Bowe gave a demure sigh and said she was not responsible for setting the pay rate. That was a ministerial call. Evans, snorting: "It's time someone got a grip on these salaries."

Hoyle said that she could "set an example to other regulators" by accepting a lower salary. With a glance at her executive wardrobe, the Labour backbencher remarked: "By the look of it you're not exactly struggling for money at the moment."

Bowe leaned forward, apparently finding it hard to hear exactly what Hoyle was saying. He does have quite a thick Lancashire accent, doesn't he, dear?

Philip Davies (Con, Shipley) noted Ofcom's boast about becoming a "light touch regulator". If it was indeed "light touch", did that not suggest less work? "Should Ofcom people therefore not be paid less and less?" he asked, with devilish logic. "Should it not be your role to reduce the cost of Ofcom, given the economic difficulties the country faces?"

Bowe gave a patronising smile and said that he was making "a general value for money point". She thought that "the quality of people doing the regulating is of the utmost importance."

Davies: "Huh! There's no correlation between salaries and quality."

Bowe, with a distinctly unamused smile: "My experience is different to your's."

Generally the confirmation hearing was a pretty soft affair, perhaps not least because the two Tories running it were so sociable to Bowe. Before the meeting began, Peter Luff (Con, Mid Worcs), chairman of the business select committee, chatted amiably and at length to her. He took care to call her "Dr Bowe" (she has a PhD in economics) and leapt in to urge MPs not to over-personalise their questions. Er, isn't that the whole point of a confirmation hearing?

The meeting had begun with culture select committee chairman John Whittingdale (Con, Maldon) making an official declaration that he and Bowe were former colleagues and old friends. "Indeed," said Bowe, with a coy smile. Hoyle, picking up on this, said: "Is there anything else you want to put on the record?" Laughter.

'Gavel Basher'

COMRADES AT WAR

SPENCER NEAL, chief boxwallah at the *New Statesman*, has had a miserable fortnight since the *Eye* revealed that he refuses to recognise a National Union of Journalists branch even though 15 of the paper's 16 hacks belong to it, and even though co-owner Geoffrey Robinson is a Labour MP.

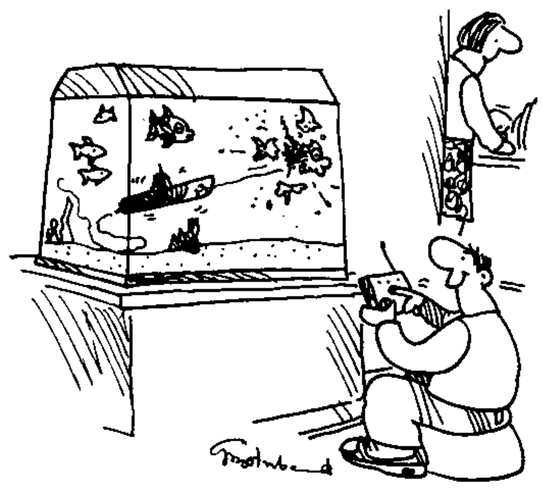
The socialist rag was damned by Robinson's fellow MPs in early-day motions, ridiculed in a new Facebook group called "*New Statesman* Hypocrites", which quickly attracted more than 300 members, and roundly chastised by the NUJ's national magazine organiser, Sue Harris. "Given the editorial stance of the publication we were astounded by their response," she announced. "We will now start the statutory procedure to gain recognition which we are confident of winning because we have more than 90 percent union membership in our proposed bargaining unit."

Neal rang Harris and threatened to sue her for daring to suggest that the *NS* didn't recognise the trade union. She gently pointed out that since this was true he'd be wasting his time. At the end of last week the shamefaced management began to retreat, after learning that they would otherwise be denounced by Labour grandees in a round-robin letter to the *Guardian*. Robinson's co-owner, millionaire Mike Danson, has now agreed to meet the NUJ.

That may not be enough to quell the mutinous hacks, however, as new editor Jason Cowley has meanwhile decided to get rid of two of the *NS*'s most popular staff, associate editor Barbara Gunnell and literary editor Ian Irvine. When the *Sindie*'s media diarist Matthew Bell got wind of the story, a panic-stricken Neal rang and begged him to suppress it. "If you agree not to run it," he pleaded, "I'll give you *an exclusive interview with Jason Cowley!*" Oddly enough, Bell felt able to resist this alluring bait.

Gunnell and Irvine learned of their fate just two days after a staff meeting at which Cowley and Neal put on a show of contrition, agreeing that there had been "communications issues" and promising a new era of transparency – but omitting to mention the imminent redundancies. Since the hard-working Gunnell ensures the magazine actually appears every week, Cowley may have to put in a few more hours himself when she's gone. At the moment he turns up only rarely on press days, and while crises engulfed his magazine last week he swanned off to India with his hero David Miliband.

"He's so out of touch he probably doesn't realise Barbara does the lion's share of the work," one hack commented. "But he'll find out soon enough."



TV

The City Uncovered with Evan Davis (BBC2)
Jeff Randall Live (Sky News)
Relocation, Relocation (C4)

RECESSIONS bring both bad and good news for television. Advertising goes down and budgets are cut, but unemployment and cheap nights in boost the captive audience.

Another boon is that business shows, usually considered niche viewing for an elite with the *Financial Times* spread on their laps in their seaside retirement homes, suddenly become sexy telly as the general audience tunes in to find out if their jobs and pensions might be going south.

The BBC, with the licence fee guaranteed years in advance, is relatively crash-proof in the short-term but has to be wary of being seen to flash the cash. So the first problem with **The City Uncovered with Evan Davis** is that it looks so bloody expensive. Within the first few minutes, Evan was filmed walking and talking in New York, Venice and Washington. A year ago, such largesse would hardly have registered. But now Evan is in the uncomfortable position of explaining to an audience why their belts have been so dramatically tightened through a series on which belts feel very loose.

The second difficulty is that the series begins from the premise, as business programmes have always been forced to, that most of the audience knows nothing much about money. But, in the few months since the economy became daily headline news, there have been hours of explanation on news shows and in newspapers about what went wrong: building societies becoming banks, new institutions taking on risky debts to get slices of the action, sub-prime yada yada yada.

So Davis now feels very late. Starting with a *Blue Peter*-ish trot through the origins of commerce – Chinese invent paper money, Italians start trading on "bancos", or benches, which gives us the word bank – he turned to how Northern Rock and Lehmann Brothers had over-reached themselves. But here he hit another snag. The advantage of the longer, later documentary on a hot topic is usually that the key players feel free to reflect at leisure. But the heads of the bankrupt banks are hiding from creditors and lawyers. So Adam Applegarth of Northern Rock was represented only by some stills of him playing cricket. In both the US and UK, Davis was stuck with underlings.

Jeff Randall Live, Sky's contribution to recession telly, stripped across the first four weeknights at 7.30pm, has set itself to get the big names and started off with Alistair Darling, live from Number 11.

As a broadcaster, Randall is very much School of Brillo. Like Andrew Neill, he radiates the impression that he would have been running the country if only the media didn't pay so much better. His shtick, like Brillo's, makes clear that he sits at the big tables and can speak to our masters on better than equal terms but that he also understands the needs and fears of plain folk at home.

Randall also has no time for the boring concept of presenter neutrality, his questions to Darling an extension of his *Daily Telegraph* columns. "I agree with that," he told the chancellor, or: "Nah, I don't agree with that!" Seeking heat rather than light, he spent most of the 25 minutes trying to get Darling to apologise for causing the recession, although everyone knew there was about as much chance of that as the chancellor leaning across and giving him a kiss.

Randall's basic dilemma, also suffered by the Evan Davis series, is trying to decide who the programme is for. Because almost everyone with a television set currently has some interest in the economy, Randall aims for jolly populism – "the hurricane raging through your High Street!" – but then he starts quizzing the boss of M&S on whether it is appropriate for him to hold the role of "executive chairman" in the long term, which is pure Pink 'Un stuff of the sort that business shows did when they assumed that no one was watching.

The strain of business shows that deal with property, however, have exactly the opposite problem: the fear that fewer viewers than before will now be tuning in.

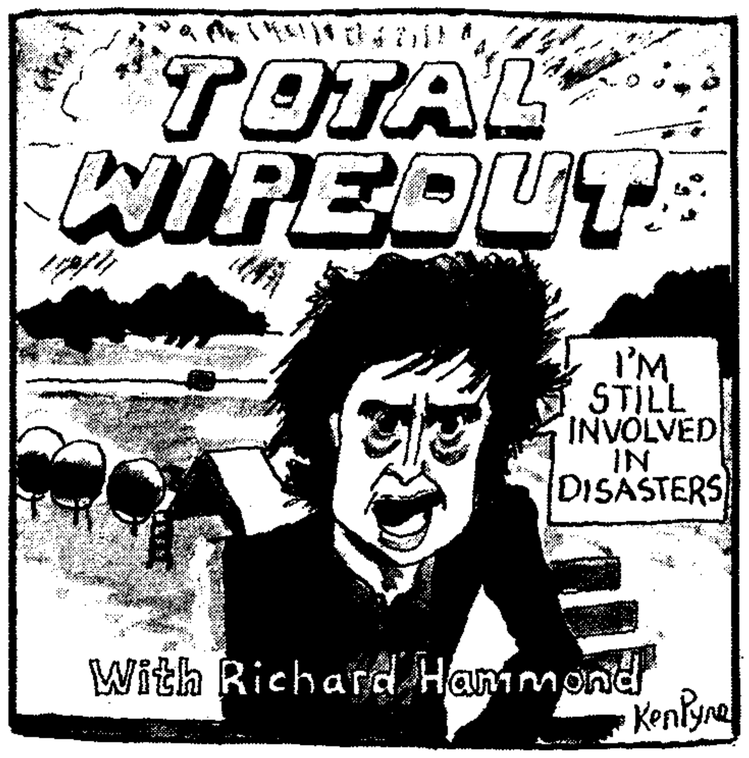
Relocation, Relocation has inadvertently become one of the comic highlights of the schedules, as Phil and Kirstie desperately try to re-invent the show from the high-mortgage porn that made them famous in the good years.

In last year's series, transmitted as the market dipped, the duo stuck bravely to the line about property remaining a good long-term investment. Now, though, they look as if they're hosting a show called *The Joy of Omelettes* during a salmonella crisis.

The opening montage of a young couple looking like they shagged each other silly while not counting their money or looking at brochures of investment properties in Tuscany was deceptively familiar. But then a grim Phil voiceover revealed that, soon after filming began, the pair became "one of the first casualties of the credit crunch", losing their mortgage and ending up living with the tenants in their buy-to-let.

Phil and Kirstie bravely claimed that they would be showing us how we can still have fun "on a tight budget" even after we have been "brought down to earth". But the appeal of their show is property porn, not property celibacy. Like a special Obese and Toothless episode of *America's Top Model*, this austerity edition rather misses the point.

'Remote Controller'



MEDIA NEWS

"THE Foreign Press Association is appalled by the statement made this morning on BBC TV by the Israeli ambassador in London indicating that the reason the foreign media have not been allowed into Gaza is due to 'infighting' in the FPA," declared that organisation on 7 January, following its successful petitioning of the supreme court in Jerusalem to allow access, despite which the military continued to deny access to the war zone.

"The FPA wishes to categorically state that the organisation has been in full compliance with the decision of the Israeli supreme court. A complete list of names was provided to the authorities, who confirmed receipt of the list."

What, then, was Israeli ambassador Ron Prosor talking about? Had he perchance got wind of the "particularly offensive strong language" used against a secretary at the Israeli FPA by ITN correspondent Julian Manyon, angry that he did not feature on the randomly selected list of six hacks which the court had ruled should be allowed across the border? The FPA's chairman, Steven Gutkin, was moved to issue a letter to members "condemning the ill-treatment" and "simply unacceptable… harassment" the woman received from Manyon.

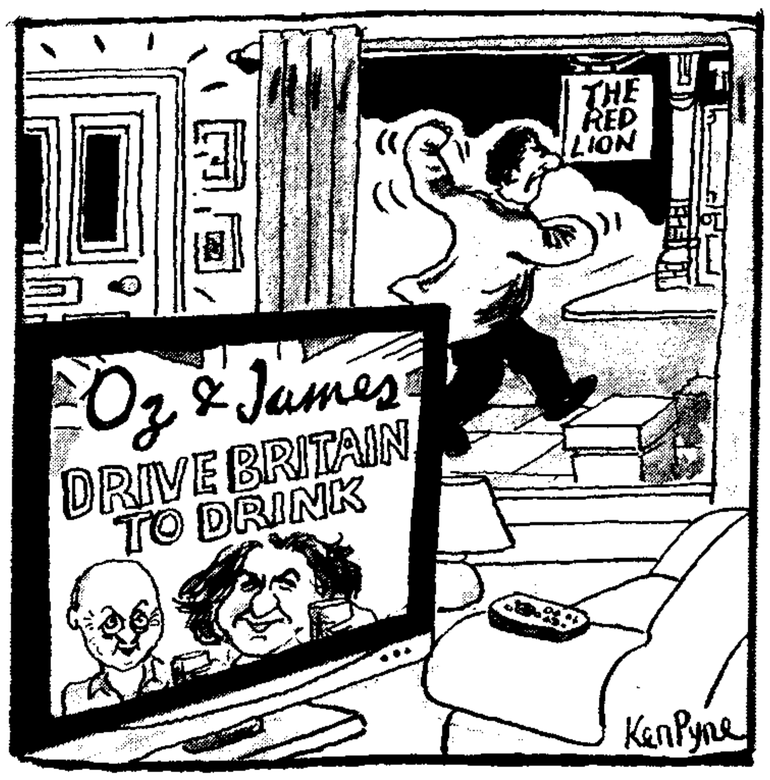
ITN editor-in-chief David Mannion promptly returned fire with a scorching missive protesting "in the strongest possible terms" about the FPA's "unfair and dictatorial manner". "The use by the FPA of language such as 'the more you irritate me the lower your name goes on the list' is, frankly, outrageous," he said.

WITH taxi bills slashed, hacks sacked, champagne banned and repeats repeated across all channels, what other methods can the BBC find of "delivering efficiencies" in the face of its £140m licence-fee shortfall?

A clue is provided by BBC1's latest Saturday-night game show, *Total Wipeout*, which *Radio Times* insists is "presented by Richard Hammond and Amanda Byram". In fact, Hammond – whose contract negotiations with *Top Gear* last year went to the wire with prolonged "horse trading" over his pay packet – spends the entire 55-minute show sitting in a broom cupboard in London. Only Byram was dispatched with contestants to a giant obstacle course in Buenos Aires.

"The whole point of this is that I'm very much watching this with the audience at home," a bashful Hammond told website *TV Scoop*. "I've just never been given the call to [go to Argentina]. I just have to literally present it to a viewer and say: 'Have a look at this, it's hilarious'."

Should the economic downturn continue, expect one of the highlights of the BBC's 2010 winter season to consist of Hammond sitting in a darkened studio watching ITV1 and turning to the camera while pointing and laughing.



DUMB BRITAIN

Wogan's Perfect Recall, C4

Terry Wogan: Which season is said to start on solstice day in December?

Contestant 1: Spring?

TW: In December, for God's sake?

Contestant 2: Summer?

The Weakest Link, BBC1

Anne Robinson: The 1959 film by Alfred Hitchcock featuring two points of the compass in its name was called North by North... what?

Contestant: South.

AR: Which first name is shared by a singer with the surname O'Connor and an actress with the surname Cusack?

Contestant: Des.

AUNTIE's local radio stations are tearing their hair out over tightened compliance rules.

Following the Sachsgate scandal, BBC local radio chiefs now insist that all shows are signed off by a senior manager. But with most of them unable to detect offensive material in Urdu and Chinese, all 48 programmes serving local ethnic communities must now be broadcast entirely in English.

At BBC Nottingham, for example, the Asian culture show *Dhamaka* had been broadcast in English, with callers slipping into different languages as they made song requests and discussed news, duly following the Beeb's commitment to "reflecting the diversity of the UK audience". No more!

A BBC spokesperson said minority languages would be reintroduced when appropriate compliance measures were in place. She could not confirm when, or what said measures could entail.

MUSIC & MUSICIANS

TWO leading figures in the music world have made impressive early bids for diva of the year with some truly bizarre behaviour.

First up is superstar violinist Itzhak Perlman. According to the niceties of concert convention, performers are not supposed to *ask* for applause. So it was a ground-breaking moment last week when Perlman told an audience off for not applauding enough.

It was a concert in the US, he was playing Messiaen; and as the audience didn't like it much, they barely clapped. Result: the virtuoso went into a strop, delivering a sharp lecture on how to behave after performances and then making them sit through the whole damned piece again, to give them the opportunity to do better. Which, chastened into submission, they did. Rapturously.

Meanwhile Claudio Abbado's haughty response to La Scala, Milan, the other week takes some beating. It was more than 20 years ago that he resigned as La Scala's music director, but the circumstances of his departure were so angry he vowed never to conduct there again.

But La Scala is now under new management and has been trying hard to woo him back. Abbado has eventually said he *will* conduct La Scala; and what's more, free of charge. But only if the city government will, as a gesture of apology, plant 90,000 new trees in the city precincts.

Since the cost of such an instant forest would exceed €2m, it's unlikely to agree. Which is presumably the outcome he expects. Couldn't he just have said no?

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

AD NAUSEAM

NIKE, worried that the hoody has become associated with crime, violence and anti-social behaviour (doh!), is desperate to improve its image. Hence its new ad "based on an inverse concept, a new meaning – Hoody On vs Hoody Off".

According to the gobbledegook, when someone has their hood on "You Are Connecting With Your Most Intimate Reality". The aim is to sell more hoodies – the new ads promote the £160 AW77 Loopwheeler – but Nike's choice of footballer Rio Ferdinand as the face of the AW77 is curious.

Ferdinand recently signed up to produce a British gangster movie called *Dead Man Running*, starring rapper 50 Cent; in 2006 he called Radio 1 presenter Chris Moyles a "faggot" on air; he has been banned from driving four times and was banned from football for eight months in 2004 for missing a drug test while he was shopping. In fact he's about as old hoody as they come.

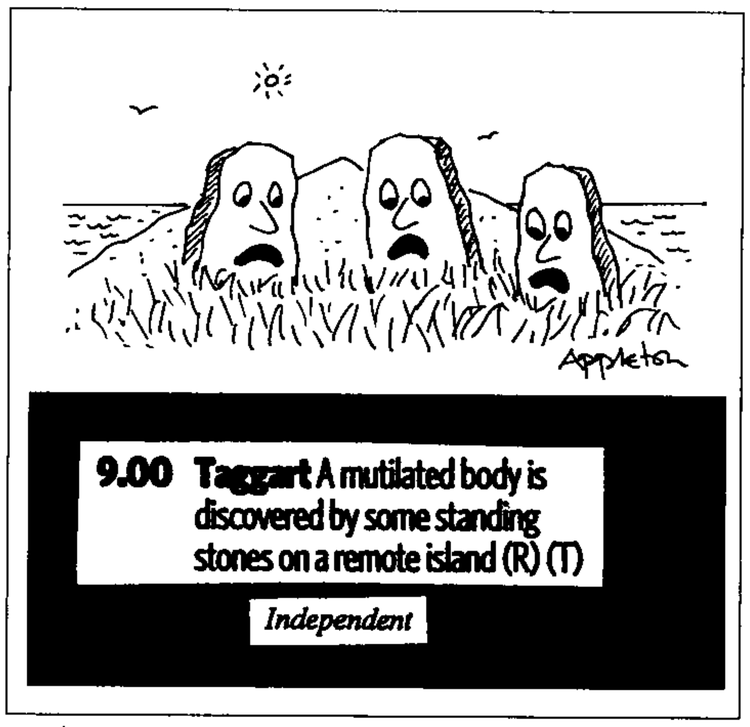
AS EVERYONE knows, Norwich Union is changing its name to Aviva (yawn) and the posters highlighting other famous name changes such as "the Quarrymen to the Beatles" are everywhere.

There's a TV advert, too, notable for the calibre of celebrity involved: Bruce Willis, Barry Humphries, Elle Macpherson, Alice Cooper and Ringo Starr all suggest that a name change was integral to their success. This kind of cross-media carpet-bombing doesn't come cheap: industry estimates value the campaign at around £9m. But as the financial services industry punishes customers like never before, should Aviva not have resisted spending so many millions on airtime and poster sites and hundreds of thousands on celebs and just stayed quiet instead?

MORE proof that UK advertising law only works for advertisers is provided by the Advanced Medical Institute's "Want Longer Lasting Sex?" posters for its priapic nasal spray.

AMI's posters sparked many complaints (one in north London was scrawled with "Our Kids Can Read".) Yet under self-regulation, no one can do anything about it. Eventually the Advertising Standards Authority orders them to be taken down, by which time AMI's posters are all over the newspapers, generating masses of free publicity way beyond the value of the original media space.

It's becoming boring to say it, but posters need pre-vetting like broadcast ads.



INVITATION OF THE WEEK

"HUNGER. Multi award-winning historical drama directed by Steve McQueen which follows the last six weeks of the life of the Irish republican hunger striker Bobby Sands.

"Champagne afternoon tea OR a three-course dinner, and the movie. Costs £35 per person."

– Brochure for Weekend Film Club at the Charlotte Street Hotel, London

FILTH WATCH

"TV IS degrading our public life," howled the front page of the *Daily Express* last week, over the shocking news that "influenced by television, more than nine out of 10 adults now admit to swearing every day."

"This degradation of civilised standards has been brought about by the capture of television by Sixties liberals who regard any notion of self-restraint as obsolete," an editorial thundered, while reporters were dispatched to ask John Beyer, director of Mediawatch UK (formerly Mary Whitehouse's National Viewers' and Listeners' Association), for his thoughts. "This sort of language is damaging our culture and the way we speak to each other," he told them. "There is no place for unnecessary swearing on television."

Impressed, the *Eye* contacted Mr Beyer and asked him what his organisation's position was on the Television X channels owned by *Daily Express* proprietor Richard Desmond, which on that very day were broadcasting shows entitled *Cunt Lust*, *Gash for Cash*, *Fancy Dress Fucks* and *Serve My Black Cock*. Did he think such fare made the *Express* a suitable partner for his campaign to clean up our screens?

"We do not have a 'partnership' with the *Daily Express* or any other newspaper," replied Mr Beyer, who was proudly exhibiting the *Express* article on the home page of the Mediawatch website. "We have no hesitation in condemning Mr Desmond's interests in pornography. Our opposition to ALL pornography is well known and documented."

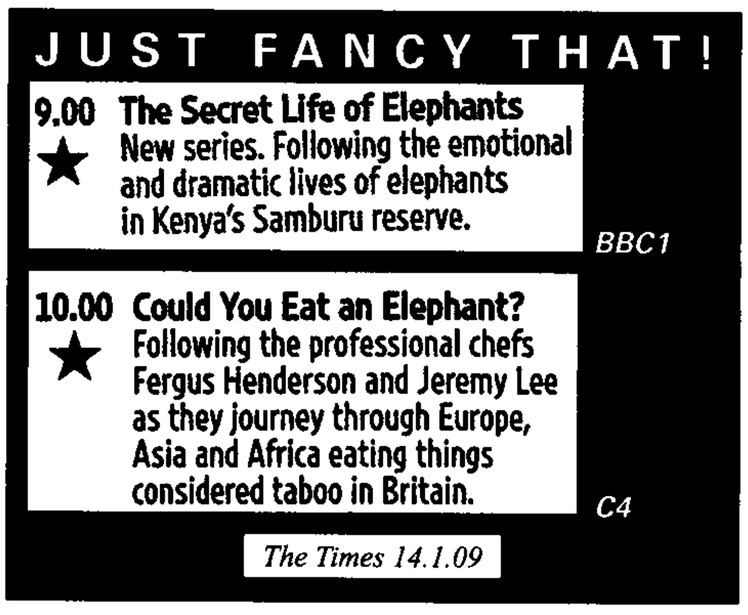
WORLD OF CRICKET

KEVIN PIETERSEN's dismissal as England cricket captain offered two of Fleet Street's bitterest enemies, Piers Morgan and Des Kelly, the opportunity to renew hostilities.

Des Kelly served as Moron's number two at the *Mirror* and has never forgiven him for this entry in Moron's published diaries: "Des has been a mistake as my deputy. He was a good sports editor but I don't rate his news sense at all." Knowing that Moron considers himself KP's best friend, Kelly tore into Pietersen on 10 January: "No doubt over the weekend... sycophantic chums will chip in to testify to the fact that he is a 'great bloke really' and will wobble their chins in indignation at the fact that he is unloved."

It is Moron's proudest boast that he is mates with Pietersen and Ian Botham. Sure enough, a day later, he was on hand to deliver a characteristically considered and proportionate verdict – "one of the most disgusting, disgraceful and nonsensical actions ever perpetrated by an English sporting board... The carving-up of Kevin Pietersen is a spineless, utterly unforgivable betrayal of the most exciting, passionate, determined and, yes, patriotic man to emerge in British sport for a very long time."

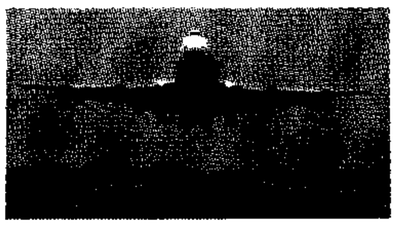
Moron approvingly quoted Botham, whose column in the *Mirror* was equally damning of the decision to axe the captain. As the *Eye* has pointed out before, Botham is chairman of the sports agency that manages Pietersen. In the previous three years in which he has opined on the cricketer, he has never seen fit to mention this conflict of interest – and there was no change this time.


JUST FANCY THAT!
9.00 The Secret Life of Elephants
★ New series. Following the emotional and dramatic lives of elephants in Kenya's Samburu reserve.
BBC1
10.00 Could You Eat an Elephant?
★ Following the professional chefs Fergus Henderson and Jeremy Lee as they journey through Europe, Asia and Africa eating things considered taboo in Britain.
C4
The Times 14.1.09

"It's part of life's rich tapestry"

SIGNAL FAILURES

Heathrow hot air



THE government's mention of high-speed rail in its decision to press ahead with Heathrow airport expansion was a clumsy fig leaf but it fooled some people, including BBC transport correspondent Tom Symonds, who reported: "The government also announced a new high-speed rail line will be built." The official Passenger Focus watchdog meekly "welcomed" the announcement.

What was actually announced was High Speed Two, a new company "to help consider the case" for a high-speed line (HSL). So we're no further ahead than when the Strategic Rail Authority commissioned a report in 2001 which concluded that "in economic, safety and accessibility terms, HSL performs better than the alternative interventions considered" and "has the potential to reduce some of the forecast growth in domestic air travel within the UK".

High Speed Two will be limited initially to developing a proposal for a new London–West Midlands line by the end of the year, after which the government will "assess the options". Labour's pals in the air lobby will be happy with that, as it's such a paltry distance for a high-speed railway that the economics may not look great; massive overheads, including design and purchase of 200mph trains, won't be balanced by the big revenue that would come from a longer new line.

More importantly for ministers, even if that line is built it won't harm aviation because London and Birmingham are too close together for flying between them to be worthwhile. Labour's objective is to ensure that lucrative London–Manchester and London–Scotland flights aren't undermined by fast trains (which have hammered continental air routes). Even Virgin's Pendolino service (top speed: 125mph) has done more than enough damage to Manchester flights.

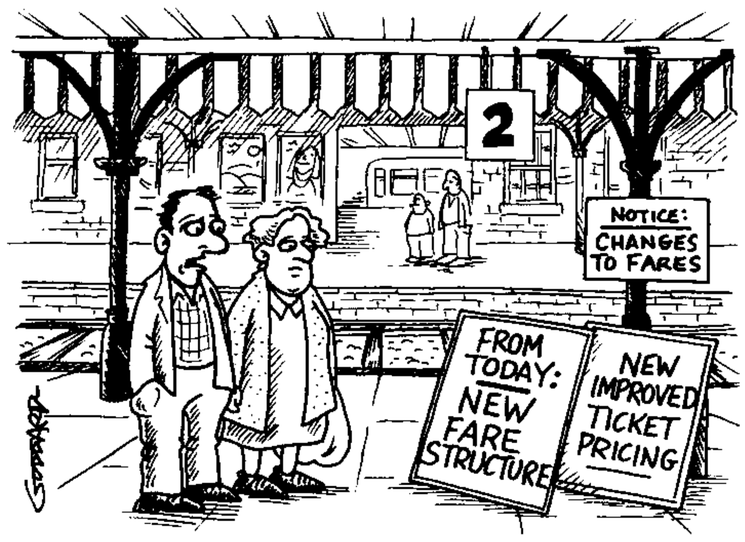
The Department for Transport (DafT) briefing acknowledged that most major countries had domestic high-speed lines, saying: "In [*sic*] would be perverse to ignore developments in Europe and the rest of the world." In the preceding paragraph, it noted that Japan started bullet trains in 1964. So that's 45 years of British perversion, and we're still at it.

DafT ministers can't even decide to electrify more railways, a simple procedure carried out by most European countries long ago for its huge financial and environmental advantages. Transport secretary Geoff Hoon said: "We are well advanced in procuring replacement trains for the intercity routes, but before we finalise our plans we need to decide whether new parts of the network should be electrified." Only Britain could spend shedloads on procuring intercity trains (which would last 30 or 40 years) *before* deciding on the trains' power source.

The decision on Heathrow's third runway shows that DafT can be quick and decisive when it wants to be. It was crucial for Heathrow to jump the queue; any studies into big rail projects will now have to assume there'll be ample airline capacity on corridors such as London-Manchester, so spending billions on intercity railways will be even harder to justify.

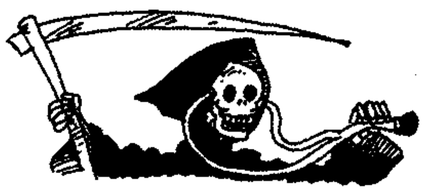
PS: The government's choice of former civil servant David Rowlands as chairman for High Speed Two speaks volumes. While he was DafT permanent secretary, high-speed rail went nowhere as further Heathrow expansion was fast-tracked. Last year the *Sunday Telegraph* reported that Heathrow's owner, BAA, offered Rowlands a directorship, which the government blocked. The air lobby must be delighted that Rowlands now controls the fate of British high-speed rail, one of its biggest potential rivals.

'Dr B Ching'



"Why can't they just say they've gone up?"

MEDICINE BALLS



The hit list

WILL the much-trumpeted WHO surgical safety checklist[1] reduce cock-ups in the NHS? The research results are certainly promising.

In eight pilot sites around the world, use of the checklist cut death rates following surgery from 1.5 percent to 0.8 percent and complication rates from 11 percent to 7 percent. The absolute risk of surgery is relatively low but, given that surgery is now more common than childbirth, with 234m operations globally a year, the introduction of the checklist has the potential to save millions of lives. But only if it's implemented properly.

The UK pilot site for the study was Lord Darzi's hunting ground – St Mary's hospital, London – but only two operating theatres were enrolled, not including the one where a gynaecology patient had her gall bladder erroneously removed (*Eye* 1222). This "wrong patient, wrong site, wrong organ" calamity will doubtless give Darzi the leverage to implement the checklist in his own trust, but what about the rest of the NHS?

The strategy of the National Patient Safety Agency (NPSA) is to issue an alert requiring anyone performing surgery in the NHS to use it by February 2010. All organisations (NHS and private) will have to submit audit to prove compliance, and any stragglers will receive a visit from the new Care Quality Commission. The UK is the first to attempt across-the-board implementation (at least in England and Wales), but the NPSA has to inspire surgical teams to use the checklist properly. The Department of Health's previous edict that all ward staff should be bare below the elbows met with widespread resistance because there is no evidence that it reduces the spread of infection. It's just cultural spin to give patients and the press the impression that the NHS is taking MRSA seriously.

The checklist seems to have a firmer evidence base, but why should a banal list of blindingly obvious basic safety checks make such a difference? Medicine is now so complex and time-pressured, with many competing demands, that the human brain can't process everything safely without the help of *aide mémoires*. One patient a day is listed for the wrong operation in the NHS, and one patient a month gets wrong site surgery (ie on the wrong part of the body). Last year's report by the chief medical officer highlighted 14 patients who'd had holes drilled in the wrong side of their head. Patients suffer and die, and hugely complex and costly surgery is ruined, because antibiotics or clot-preventing drugs aren't given in time.

The checklist may work not just because it forces someone to tick a box, but also because each item has to be read out loud and agreed by every member of the surgical team, who have all introduced themselves by name and explained their role. Some NHS staff might find this all a bit embarrassing and un-British, and it may just be that the checklist was effective because of the "Hawthorne effect": everyone knew they were being observed so they upped their game. In the unobserved NHS, the temptation may just be to take the piss out of it.

However, the most telling feedback came from 229 surgeons involved in the study. Eighty percent felt it had improved safety and reduced errors, and 92.6 percent would want the checklist to be used if they were having an operation. So why wait until February 2010? If you're having an operation – NHS or private – don't sign the consent form until you have written assurance that the checklist is being used. Better still, download it, take it in with you and stick it to your chest.

M.D.

[1] www.npsa.nhs.uk/nrls/alerts-and-directives/alerts/safer-surgery-alert

ECO-GNOMICS

Flat tyres

WITH governments increasingly aligned on the need for a low carbon future and a change of direction now emerging in the US, businesses might be expected to want to show off their green credentials. Many are of course – but not tyre maker Dunlop, which remains blissfully oblivious to the new climate (sic).

Bemused green hacks recently received a triumphant email from the firm's PR people at Ward Lovett, who appeared unaware of the target audience they were addressing.

"Here's some good news from Dunlop about their manufacturing facility at the iconic Fort Dunlop in Birmingham which is working flat out to meet orders for racing tyres," the breathless email opened, before a press release boasted how the company is doing better than ever.

"The hand-finished special racing tyres manufactured by Dunlop continue to be shipped around the globe as they have done since 1888. As more people race on Dunlop tyres than any other brand in the UK, the company is working hard to keep on top of demanding order schedules… Dunlop race tyres are used in many race championships for cars and motorcycles including the prestigious Le Mans 24 hour race and the famous Isle of Man TT races… We believe that race championships such as these will continue to flourish, albeit with some budgetary restraint in 2009… For this reason we believe that motorsport will continue - albeit with tightened budgets - for the foreseeable future and that Dunlop racing tyres will continue to contribute to racing thrills for many years to come."

Meanwhile Ward Lovett's website advises potential clients: "Positive public perception of your organisation through newsworthy stories across all media vehicles – its [sic] just part of the comprehensive PR service we operate. Damage limitation, company representation and event organisation come under this remit and its [sic] a powerful marketing tool to have in your box."

Quite what positives about Dunlop the environmental hacks were supposed to take from Ward Lovett's efforts remain unclear. Certainly nothing about any green initiatives. Insofar as green hacks are interested in motor sport, it would probably be in what the industry is doing to reduce tyre use and cut carbon emissions, rather than how its prospects for more business look terrific. Ward Lovett's own headline inadvertently summed it up well: "Tyre Manufacturer Races on Regardless".

ROTTEN BOROUGHS

WINTER CHILL

THE deaths of seven children through abuse or neglect in Doncaster was a tragedy waiting to happen, a former senior child protection manager in the borough has told the *Eye*.

Sharon Docherty, who took early retirement from the council in 2006 after becoming disillusioned with the regime of elected mayor Martin Winter, contacted the *Eye* after seeing Winter declare that child protection was his "highest priority" on GMTV.

The government has launched an urgent inquiry following Ofsted's assessment of the council's children's services department as "inadequate" and a review which described the handling of one case in which a 10-month-old boy died as "chaotic and dangerous".

According to Docherty, the council's child protection systems began to fall apart in 2004 after the council's then new managing director Susan Law (*Eyes passim*) brought in new management structures across the council. The idea was to "tear down the barriers between different council departments and different layers of management", said Law at the time. "In reality," Docherty told the *Eye*, "the new line management and accountability were unclear and usually led by someone from a different discipline – eg someone from an education background managing streets and alleyways and, bizarrely, someone who had formerly been a manager at a supermarket chain running children's services. The idea was that a good manager can manage anything without needing specialist knowledge. This has been well and truly debunked in Haringey, following the Baby P case. [*As Eye 1224 reported, Sharon Shoesmith, Haringey's sacked director of social services, came to the council from Crapita, for whom she had worked as a schools inspector.*] Child protection workers need transparent, clear lines of advice, support, supervision and management by people who have more experience in these issues. Team leaders in turn need more experienced senior managers and service heads to provide the same."

Obvious? Not in modern local government, it seems.

Winter *(see Eyes passim ad nauseam)* was all for his expensive new appointment's blue-sky revolution, until the pair fell out when Law turned her attention to allegations of corruption surrounding the mayor's involvement in the Glass Park regeneration project (*Eyes passim*) and he forced her out. The whole fiasco eventually cost taxpayers more than £300,000.

Last week Winter, who no longer rules with the support of the council's Labour group and last summer ignored a no-confidence motion which he lost 42-8, resisted further calls for his resignation. He had to stay on, he claimed, because "the buck stops here".

Sadly, clichés are not enough when children's lives are at stake.

NO BALLS GAMES

VICTORIA ward in the London borough of Hackney is a tough place for children to play. There is little open space, traffic is heavy, and the streets are plagued by gangs.

Last August Ahmed Benyermak, 16, died when he fell from a block of flats while fleeing from a knife gang; 10 days later Shaquille Maitland-Smith, 14, was stabbed to death outside his home. A gang called the "Fields Boys" makes children wary of playing in the London Fields park to the west, and Victoria Park to the south is also seen as dangerous.

Residents who have campaigned for a staffed adventure playground to be built in the ward were cheered last year when the government announced its "Children's Plan" programme: £235m to be spent on 3,500 play areas across England and 30 "Pathfinder" councils in deprived areas – including Hackney – to get around £2m each to build new adventure playgrounds. Children's secretary and Hackney resident Ed Balls said: "We need exciting and stimulating places for children to play, close to where they live ... Let's see an end to the 'no ball games' culture and a start of a new era where children's needs and children's play areas are at the heart of the planning process." Hurrah!

Residents who have pressed Hackney for an adventure playground to be built on a long-vacant council-owned lot on the ward's Kingshold estate, were delighted. Nearly a year on they are not so happy. The council has yet to identify a site for an adventure playground. If one is not built by March 2010 the money will revert to the government. Hackney claims the potential site, on Tryon Crescent, is earmarked for housing – despite the fact that it has been empty for 10 years and is not subject to any planning application.

In response to *Eye* questions the Department for Children, Schools and Families said Hackney was "on track" to build its adventure playground, while the council said it had identified 12 out of 28 sites for refurbished or new play areas and intended to use its £2.2m from the scheme in full.

Meanwhile, da yoof need not despair. The council has awarded a grant of £50,000 to Hands Inc, an outfit that offers "holistic massage" to young persons to aid their "emotional orientation". Wicked!

● NEVER mind the Knowledge. Wiltshire county council wants taxi drivers to sign up for a 13-week course leading to an NVQ in "Road and Passenger Transport". "Modules" include customer services, disability legislation and tourist information. A spokesperson for Wiltshire College says: "This will give cabbies a chance to build up their portfolio of qualifications." The syllabus does not include cleaning up vomit or nabbing fare dodgers. Cabbie Nick Pearce tells the *Eye*: "No one has explained what an NVQ is. We think it stands for 'No Value Qualification'."

BLOODY LLL

THE ARREST by the Met's serious crime directorate of Asuman Ozkan, chairwoman of Lambeth Living Limited, on suspicion of obtaining property by deception, is another blow for tenants who hoped last year's transfer of Lambeth council's 34,000 council homes to LLL would be a change for the better.

The transfer made LLL the largest "Almo" (arm's length management organisation) in London. It came after a ballot in which fewer than 12 percent of those eligible voted in favour of transfer, despite the inducement of £240m of government money being made available to do up the borough's rundown estates.

This is not the first time Ms Ozkan has found herself in hot water. In 2007 she was suspended from the Angell Town estate management board, for "untoward behaviour" to fellow members.

Since LLL took over the council's housing stock a £22m hole has appeared in the Almo's finances. Long-promised repairs and improvements now won't happen, housing offices will shut, staff will lose their jobs and there will be huge rent and service charge rises. One hundred and thirty job losses include the withdrawal of concierges on some of London's most crime-ridden estates. Oh, brave new world!

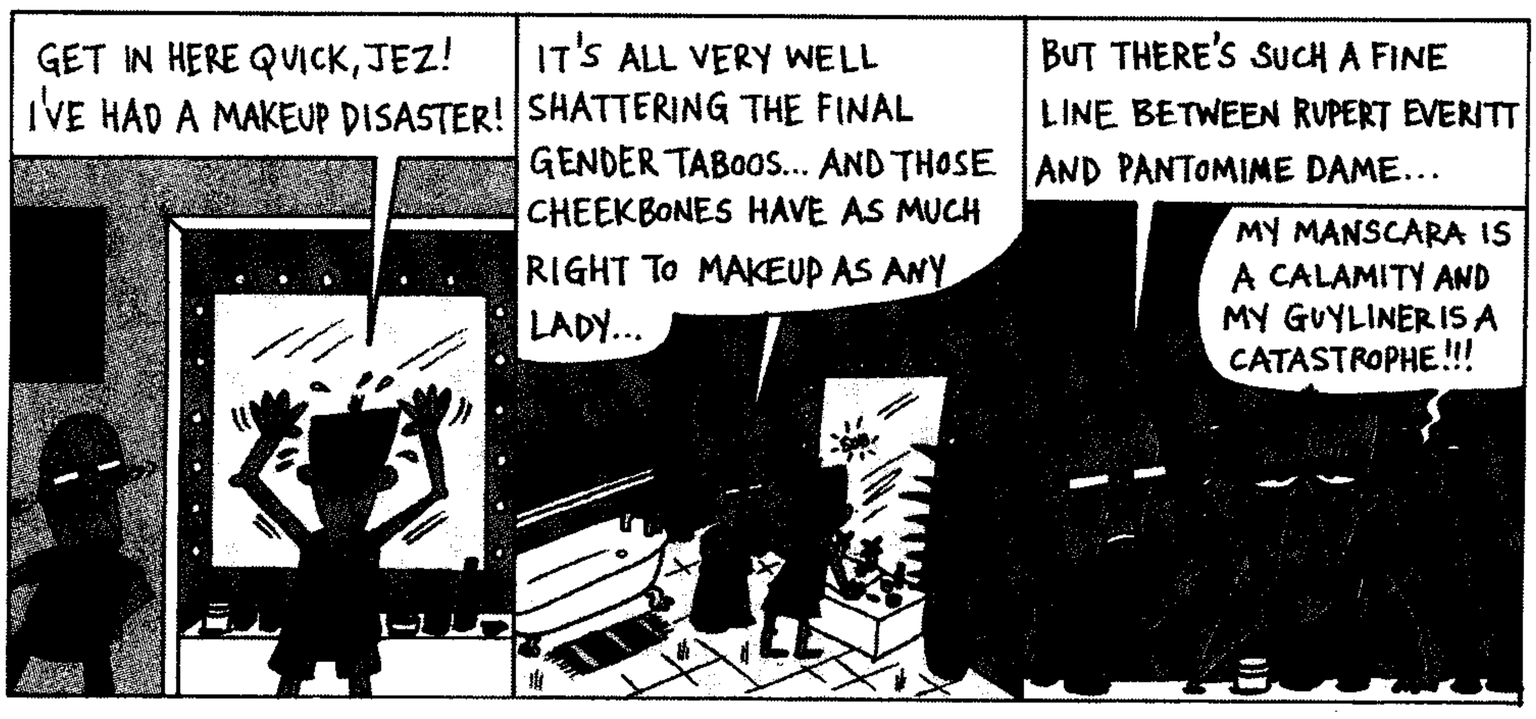
BASILDON FAWLTY

WHAT do you do if your HQ is due to be demolished? Why, spend £2m refurbishing it, of course.

Tory Basildon council's offices are due to be knocked down in a few years' time when the town centre's planned £1bn "regeneration" goes ahead. Included in the refurbishment – already £223,000 over budget – will be a new boardroom in the chief executive's "suite", complete with such essential aids to effective local government as a 52in TV, DVD player and Freeview box at a total cost of £20,000. Council leader Malcolm Buckley told the local press that critics wanted to "live in the past and not use technology and think you need to employ 12 people to fill in the accounts when one computer can do the job". This may explain how Buckley, who is supposed to proof read the council's newspaper before it goes to the printers, missed a glaring cock-up caused by the council's £100,000 new PR team, brought in from Westminster city council [them again!]. All 77,000 copies had to be pulped at a cost of £4,000. The editorial blunder that Buckley missed said planning permission had been granted for the redevelopment of a rundown shopping centre, when in fact no planning application has yet been made. Or perhaps Cllr Buckley knows something other councillors don't...

● IN *Eye* 1226 we wrote about opposition to Tesco's plans to build a new supermarket in Ottery St Mary, Devon. Tesco has asked us to make clear that it does not own the listed Victorian buildings on the site, but the (larger) redundant factory area next door. Happy to oblige!

IT'S GRIM UP NORTH LONDON KNIFE & PACKER


GET IN HERE QUICK, JEZ! I'VE HAD A MAKEUP DISASTER!
IT'S ALL VERY WELL SHATTERING THE FINAL GENDER TABOOS... AND THOSE CHEEKBONES HAVE AS MUCH RIGHT TO MAKEUP AS ANY LADY...
BUT THERE'S SUCH A FINE LINE BETWEEN RUPERT EVERITT AND PANTOMIME DAME...
MY MANSCARA IS A CALAMITY AND MY GUYLINER IS A CATASTROPHE!!!

NOOKS and CORNERS

OF ALL the astonishing and sublime structures that emerged from Britain's pre-eminence in the Industrial Revolution, one of the most extraordinary is Marshall's Mill in Leeds – otherwise known as Temple Mill. It is so-called because it looks like a temple: its Millstone Grit façade was a product of the contemporary fashion for things Egyptian and was closely based on ancient temples in the Nile valley.

Built in 1838-40 by the entrepreneur James Marshall, Temple Mill was a flax-spinning mill. The engineer was James Combe; but the man who designed the monumental exterior was the Egyptologist James Bonomi who had spent a decade measuring and drawing temples in Egypt and would go on to advise on the design of the Egyptian Court at the Crystal Palace and eventually became the second curator of Sir John Soane's Museum.

The office block in Marshall Street, with its central entrance and lotus columns, was inspired by the Temple of Horus at Edfu, but the longer façade of the adjacent factory wing was derived from the Typhonium at Denderah. The factory was not only remarkable in style: behind the stone front is a vast, single-storey, iron-framed interior, some two-acres in area, in which cast-iron columns with Egyptian capitals support a brick-vaulted roof. The columns were connected with adjustable tie-rods to cope with changes in temperature or humidity. As for the immense roof, penetrated by 66 glass domes, its bitumen coating was protected with an 8-inch covering of soil on which sheep grazed.

Apart from the loss of the original factory chimney in the shape of Cleopatra's needle, this amazing structure survived intact. But then, last month, one of the columns on the factory front suddenly shattered, flinging a large chunk of stone over the railings on to the pavement, and an area of the roof, together with a dome, collapsed. This was a consequence of long-term neglect.

A survey conducted three years earlier had found that the front wall was leaning outwards and that the iron structure was under stress – possibly because of water seeping in through the concrete that unfortunately was later poured over the roof. Two tie rods have since snapped and three column capitals cracked. So why hasn't this grade I listed building been properly looked after and repaired?

In 2005 the building – long used for storage – was bought by SJS Property Management of London along with surrounding land. Grand plans were announced for regenerating the Holbeck area by building new commercial and retail space while Temple Mill was to become "the first place in the UK to embrace the European concept of a cultural retail centre" – whatever that may be. But Leeds city council foolishly – culpably – failed to link the planning permission it granted for the new development to a requirement to restore Temple Mill, thus allowing the developer to leave this famous, wonderful building empty and derelict.

And who or what is SJS Property Management? It is a firm owned by none other than the *Telegraph*-owning twins Sir David and Sir Frederick Barclay (*Eyes passim ad nauseam*), who made their money in property and now live on a remote island in a castle designed by Quinlan Terry. While overseeing the destruction of a once-great newspaper, they also now appear to be presiding over the decline of a nationally important grade I listed monument. And to think the Queen gave them knighthoods!

AN article in the latest issue of* Cornerstone, *the magazine of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, describing the fate of a "protected" German village, has worrying implications for anyone in Britain living near an airport.

Although Heuersdorf, a medieval village near Leipzig, has 43 formally protected buildings and a 13th century church, it is currently being bull-dozed off the map. Why? Because it stands above a belt of lignite, or brown coal. Around 300 villages in Germany were sacrificed to open-cast mining over the last century, but Heuersdorf escaped – until today. After a 15-year battle, the village is now being obliterated by Mibrag, an American-owned mining company, after the Saxon government passed a law overriding heritage and environmental protection law as extracting coal was deemed to be in the national interest.

What has this to do with us? As Robin Stummer writes in Cornerstone, this is "one of the most extreme cases of mass heritage destruction in recent years. And, most worryingly of all, it could set a pattern for large-scale corporate destruction at other sensitive historic and natural sites in Europe – including some in the U.K."

These are most likely to be sites near airports. As we know, our air-obsessed government is determined to press ahead with new runways at both Stansted and Heathrow. At Stansted, the plans require the removal of dozens of listed buildings; at Heathrow, the third runway will do away with the village of Sipson. And what happened at Heuersdorf is now taking place around Stansted. The British Airports Authority is busy buying up land; people are leaving and buildings are beginning to fall into disrepair as the demoralised community is slowly destroyed.

"Playing the wait-and-demoralise game appears to pay off for companies intent on large-scale development or demolition, especially those involving historic buildings which are protected by statute."

We have been warned.

'Piloti'

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

EU leaders' "historic" climate change deal secured at the end of last year in fact promises an "historic" windfall profit-in-waiting for some of Europe's biggest polluters, the *Eye* can reveal.

The windfall will be generated by the EU's emissions trading scheme, which caps the emissions of polluting heavy industry and requires big firms such as steelmakers to buy extra emission allowances if they pollute beyond their cap. However, up to the cap most allowances are given to firms for free. If firms cut their emissions, they can sell any excess and make a profit.

This isn't new; but December's deal included an obscure rule that, when combined with effective industry lobbying, is set to increase the windfall to scandalous proportions.

Crucially firms can bank allowances they currently receive for free and hold on to them into the next phase of emissions trading. Until now, the amount of free allowances given to companies has been decided by individual governments. Subjected to massive lobbying, not to mention blackmail from firms that have threatened to relocate to India or Ukraine, the emissions allowances given have been overly generous to heavy industry.

Take steelmaker Corus, for example. From 2005-2007, its carbon dioxide emissions were around 26.5m tonnes. But for each year from 2008-2012, it has been given 34.5m tonne allowances – or a surplus of around 32m over the four years (the surplus will probably be even more given falling demand for steel in the economic downturn).

Corus just needs to sit on its unused allowances until the emissions trading scheme's next phase (2013-2020), when the emissions cap will be tightened, allowances will be in shorter supply and the carbon market price for a tonne of emitted carbon may have risen to, say, €30 (it's currently €13.50). Then, hey presto, almost €1bn for free!

The surpluses given to steelmakers, cement firms and the like have been counterbalanced by extremely stingy allowances for power companies, who must go to market to make good the shortfall. But as they can pass the cost directly to consumers via higher energy prices, it means they won't lose out either. Brussels claims everyone's a winner when it comes to fighting climate change – but not if you're struggling to pay a (rising) electricity bill.

EU-phemisms

Slushfunds, backhanders, spurious expense accounts, missing subsidy payment...

MEPs may have voted to protect against climate change but they're less keen to act when it affects their own expenses and travel perks.

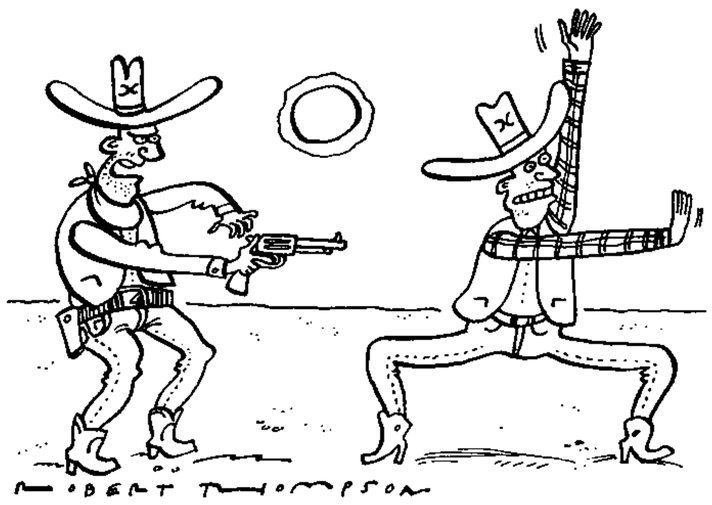
An Open Europe campaign to save a further €203m a year by scrapping the MEPs' monthly travelling circus between Brussels and the Strasbourg parliament met with lukewarm results: only 268 out of 785 MEPs even voted, failing to reach the requisite number of 393 votes to become official.

The trips, which see 3,000 staff and 15 lorries carrying crates of documents, are estimated to generate 20,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide a year (said by Green MEPs to equal 13,000 return flights from London to New York) even though the parliament building is empty for 307 days a year. An online petition in favour of scrapping Strasbourg was supported by a million ordinary voters. But who cares about them?

YOUNG BRITISH ARTISTS

BY BIRCH

Quite right! Leading students to believe it's easy to make it big in the art world. It's so unfair...
ARTISTS ACCUSE ART SCHOOLS OF PROMOTING A 'CELEBRITY CULTURE' AMONG STUDENTS. "IRRESPONSIBLE" — GAVIN TURK AND OTHERS



"When I said 'Dance!", Kincaid, I didn't mean contemporary"

Recessionballs

"First the credit crunch hit people's wallets and now our hygiene habits are the latest casualty, according to a survey. Half of us admit to showering only once every three days to save money. And 60 percent drain every last drop from a shower gel bottle before throwing it away… The survey of 1,000 people by Mira Showers reveals that armpits are the part most people clean first."
– **Daily Express**

"Despite the credit crunch, you can still treat yourself to a little celebrity-style when it comes to exercising during and after pregnancy. Sporty Bump is a pioneering range of sportswear designed specifically for pregnant women."
– **Press Release**

"Credit Crunch Crisis? Beat the blues and make new friends with brand new UK website Letter Llama where people all over the UK can make new friends with similar interests and write/receive proper letters on virtual notepaper… £10 buys a 12 month subscription and the choice of 10 contacts."
– **Press Release**

"Ethical UK company HayMax is launching a new variety of its organic, drug-free hayfever balm. HayMax™ Aloe Vera helps beat the credit crunch and is kind to the environment. Retails at £6.80."
– **Press Release**

"Prioritise on what's really important, especially with the credit crunch restraining your purse strings, so why not concentrate on what really makes a difference; like your smile, which research shows is one of the first things people notice about you. A smile costs nothing and could make someone's day. The GUM® Original White vibrating Toothbrush® is an ultra-slim, battery-operated toothbrush which produces sonic waves…"
– **Press Release for toothbrush costing £11.73**

Obamaballs

"President-Elect Obama's notion of change and his commitment to fiscal responsibility match the Ikea philosophy of practical and affordable home furnishings for all."
– **Press release from Ikea announcing its "Embrace Change '09" promotion**

NUMBER CRUNCHING

13 Israelis killed in recent Gaza conflict

1,300 Palestinians killed in recent Gaza conflict

1,300,000 Palestinians in whole of Gaza

Letters

Private Eye

Torn off a Strip

Sir,

Congratulations! Despite the credit crunch it's clear from the rabidly anti-Israeli tone of issue 1227 that the Eye has secured its financial future by way of funding from a middle east sovereign wealth fund.

That last issue was not quite Al-Jazeera in production values but close enough. Keep it up and if you can include a few pro-Hamas words in the next issue you might be looking for funding from the BBC.

Well done.

Yours,
LIAM HEMMINGS,
Via email.

An aye for the Eye

Sir,

I am writing in to complain about the letter above (this on the assumption that you've had a flood of self-righteous letters condoning Israel's savage attacks).

The Eye stands out among the press as providing a balanced view.

You criticise freely the excesses and wrongdoings of both Israel, the Palestinian Authority, Hamas and the various other factions involved in the tragedy of the land that was Palestine until 1948. Apart from anything else this gives your commentary on the current massacre in Gaza a greater legitimacy than that of the rest of the press.

What outrages Israel's supporters is that they are used to a completely supine response from the news media when Israel acts in its customary massively disproportionate way.

Keep up the good work.

Yours,
PAUL COYNE,
Glasgow.

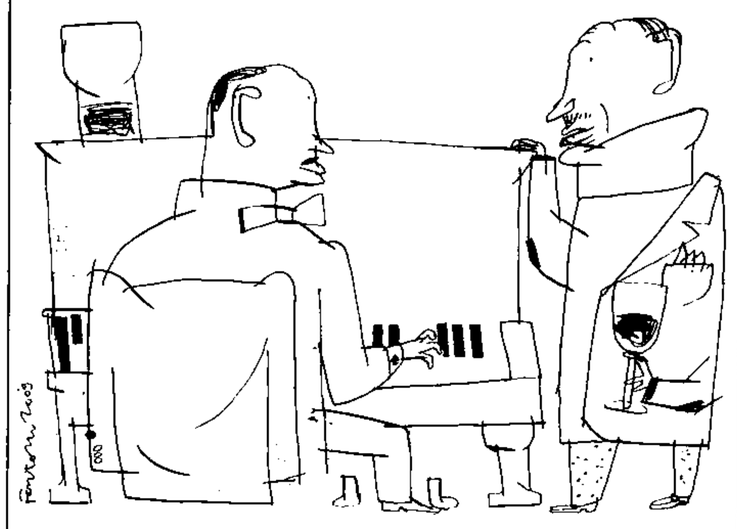
Hacked to bits

Sir,

So Barry Keevins (Letters, 1227) didn't knock on the door (of the McCanns' house, Hackwatch, Eye 1225), because he didn't make it in time. I wish Private Eye had discovered this incidental detail by calling the esteemed journalist. You could have fitted it in a sentence rather than four paragraphs of self-deluding nonsense.

DAVID MASON,
Via email.

Scenes You Seldom See



"I love the piano but I've never wished that I'd learned to play"

Digging a hole

Sir,

Re "Terrier Trouble", In The Back, Eye 1227.

Your assertion that the army is buying "off the shelf JCBs" doesn't really tell the whole story.

To be pedantic, they are buying the JCB High Mobility Engineer Excavator, which any fule knows is a purpose designed military vehicle with armour and "camo" paint.

Yours,
ROBIN ECKLEY,
Via email.

●*True. As well as adding extra protection to some of its earth-moving gear in Afghanistan, like the Medium Wheel Tractor, to fill some of the gaps left by the late delivery of the Terrier, the Army is also buying off-the-shelf JCBs to do some of the Terrier work. As Mr Eckley says, these JCBs are military vehicles that are already armoured. Ed.*

Lookalike

Mandelson

Hawtrey

Sir,

I wonder if anyone else has noticed the increasing similarity between the now bespectacled Peter Mandelson and the late bespectacled comic actor Charles Hawtrey, the man who played Private Widdle.

Yours,
ALAN WHITING,
(Via email).

Mail hormones

Sir,

Issue 1227, Street of Shame, tells us about girls showing their knickers, up-skirt shots and so on in a recent issue of the Daily Mail.

You fail to tell us which issue of the paper in question this article appeared in so that we may write suitable letters of moral outrage to the editor!

I trust you will correct this oversight?

Yours,
LAURENT BELET,
Lugano, Switzerland.

Lost in the Forest

Sir,

The situation in the London Borough of Waltham Forest is even more zany than Piloti reports (Eye 1227). Having reduced the hours of the William Morris Gallery (as well as Vestry House Museum and Archives) and dispensed with expert staff in order to save £56,000, the council have now found money to increase the opening hours to slightly above their original level. What has been lost is the expertise of Peter Cormack, former Keeper of the Gallery, widely regarded and respected as one of the foremost William Morris experts in the world. Peter Cormack worked at the Gallery for nearly 30 years, showing dedication often beyond the call of duty. His efforts have at least been vindicated and recognised by those with better taste and judgement than the Waltham Forest decision makers by his award of a MBE in the New Year Honours list.

BILL MEASURE,

Leytonstone, London E11.

Sir,

I'm surprised Piloti thinks the 'brutish' Labour councillors of Waltham Forest either don't know or couldn't care that William Morris, whose eponymous gallery they have been running into the ground over two years now, was a pioneering socialist and conservationist. Surely that's precisely why the gallery has to go.

JUDITH MARTIN,

Winchester, Hants.

Rising damp

Sir,

Re Nooks & Corners, Eye 1227.

Many of the buildings created in the 1920s and 30s using concrete on a steel frame have proved to be astronomically expensive to maintain and repair. Broadcasting House (BH) in London and the de la Warr Pavilion in Bexhill are examples, and judging by the attractive but very small illustration you print, Finsbury Health Centre is another.

The problem was often that the steel was not pre-coated as it is nowadays, and damp caused the metal to rust and expand. The architects were innovative but also sometimes young and inexperienced (as at Bexhill) and using a new construction method which they did not fully understand, though the appearance of these marvellous buildings inspires great affection.

The trouble is, who is going to pay for sensitive repairs? And how long will they take? The notorious drilling noises at BH have been audible for years if not decades.

Yours,
GRISELDA MUSSETT,

Faversham, Kent.

Lowering the tone

Sir,

A short while ago I was reading your amusing publication when I suffered the distressing experience of noticing that an anonymous reviewer had actually praised someone's autobiography.

Now I see that a person calling himself 'M.D.' is being complimentary about the NHS. I don't buy Private Eye in order to read this sort of nonsense. No wonder they don't give their names. If you can't manage to control this outpouring of not disparaging material I will be forced to take out a subscription so that I can cancel it – not a pleasant prospect in the present financial climate.

Your faithfully,
KEITH SPURGIN,

Via email.

Sir,

I counted two positive book reviews last year. It is quite right that your book reviewer was fired for his apparent love-hate relationship with celeb biographies. I assume he merely received a formal warning following his praise of William Shatner's autobiography (in April?) last year, which he clearly ignored, making his positively glowing review of Paul O'Grady's a sackable offence.

No recourse to an employment tribunal for him then.

Yours,
KARL MEEKINGS,

Via email.

TOP MERSEYSIDE STORIES
– Hunt after father and son stabbed
– Man shot outside city nightclub
– Culture year finishes with bang

BBC News website

Dumb insult

Sir,

Let me be the (choose as appropriate: first, 100th) person to point out that Hillary Clinton's middle name, Diane, isn't an "R" (Dumb Britain, Eye 1227), unlike her maiden name, Rodham, which is.

As for the number of people who saw the US Presidential election on BBC (Number Crunching, 1227), you don't think the fact that it was 4am in Britain when Obama reached the number of votes he needed had something to do with that, do you?

Speaking of Number Crunching: 71m – Number of people in the USA who watched the Presidential election results (all stations combined); 97m – Number of people in the USA who watched the Super Bowl nine months earlier.

DON DEL GRANDE,

San Francisco, USA.

Spelling's a joke

Sir,

Were the spelling mistakes in this week's Eye a deliberate homage to the falling standards of education alluded to by your piece 'State School Musical'?

One certainly hopes so, though even a product of the local comprehensive could probably tell you that Gordon Brown should be promising to BAIL out the banks, not bale them out (p17, The Supreme Leader's New Year Promises), and that Wossy PEDALLED down the street rather than peddled down it (p22, Ross In New BBC Shame).

C-minus, See me, could do better, etc etc.

Regards,
CATHERINE SCOTT,

Via email.

"M'bitch shows no respect man, innit"

Expensive side effects?

Sir.

I enjoyed, as ever, M.D.'s insightful column in Eye 1227. But I wonder if he is too sanguine about the effects of enabling private drug purchases through GPs.

Consider a drug company marketing its new product, Miraculum. At present, its only real option for substantial sales in the UK is through the NHS; the price will be determined by bargaining, with the NHS having the stronger hand. If private drug purchases become easier, however, the drug company will have the choice of selling Miraculum at a price that will gain NICE's approval, or setting a much higher price in order to gain private customers only (perhaps accompanying this with overhyped claims of the product's effectiveness). If private drug purchases through GPs become easier, I suspect that we will see more companies choosing the latter approach, to the detriment of most patients.

Of course, it may be that the benefits of extra flexibility would outweigh these potential costs, but we should not imagine that this is a free lunch.

Yours faithfully,
JOE PERKINS,

Via email.

SUPERMODELS KERBER

VICTORIA BECKHAM MODELS VERY SKIMPY ARMANI UNDERWEAR
GIORGIO··· IT'S NO USE!!!....
···I'LL NEED A SMALLER SIZE!!!
BUT THAT'S ALREADY A SIZE QUADRUPLE ZERO!!!
BAGGY

Brought to book

Sir,

As ever, I am mainly at a loss as to what your problem is when you are discussing the goings on in the literary world and its reviews.

Why are you surprised if a right-wing historian enjoys the work of another right-wing historian; do you expect Andrew Roberts to wax lyrical about Eric Hobsbawn? And what is the amazement that people within organisations or publishing houses might enjoy their colleagues' work? Have you any proof that Philip Hensher or Adam Mars-Jones actually liked other works better, but just stuck stuff from their employers on their lists? The literary world is very small and many know each other and gather into like-minded groups – so where's the confusion?

Shock, horror – hold the front page; Irish authors like Irish authors. What exactly is the problem with liking your friends' and colleagues' work? It is only important if you hear, or know, that someone is lying to further their own ends.

Perhaps you would like no reviewer to be a writer, but I think that would be a great loss to us – many of our best reviewers are writers of books themselves.

When there is so much blatant corruption in the world, I think you milk this particular area to death quite unnecessarily.

Everything else is perfect, of course.

Yours sincerely,
MARK FLEMING,

London, SE5.

Warning for commuters in freeze

Phil Lavelle went on a crash course to learn how to drive safer in freezing conditions.

BBC News website

Photo opportunity

Sir,

We need cheering at this time of hard frosts and economic gloom. Do you by any chance have in your files an iconic photo of people enjoying themselves in the warm, carefree days and nights of long ago?

BRIAN AND GEMMA FORSTER,

Via email.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"In the second half the tide turned completely on its head..."

Commentator, Radio 5 Live
(Chris Beard)

"The ECB have obviously been listening to us going at each other leather and tongs this morning."

MIKE PARRY, TalkSport
(Mark Scott)

"Gazza will literally be going through cold turkey for the rest of his life."

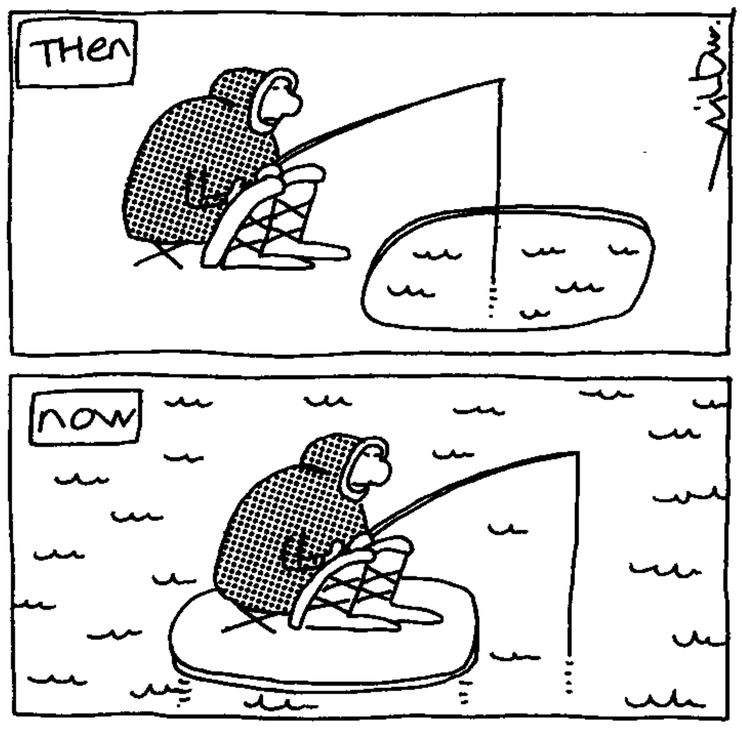
Commentator, TalkSport
(Billy Menmuir)

"Aston Villa attacking their 1000-plus fans behind the goal..."

Commentator, ITV
(Andy Croxall)

"Free kick to Preston... just how fatal will it be for Liverpool?"

CLIVE TYLDESLEY, ITV
(Andrew Harrison)



Pedantry Corner

Sir,

I must take (slight) issue with RGJ's cartoon on Whittard of Chelsea (Eye 1227, p14). I too am sorry (and sad) after my 27 years with Giles Hilton [Whittard's taster-in-chief], but he is much more handsome than he is portrayed – even after his 30+ years with Whittard!

VERITY BLANCHET,

Contigny, France.

... On page 13 of your organ (1227) you attribute a news item concerning the governor of Illinois "soliciting brides" to "Gruaniad website". Is this the first time you have attributed a wrong spelling to a wrongly spelled wrong spelling, or has "Grauniad" become a bit dated?

STEVE WILSON.

... CBE does not stand for Commander of the British Empire (Eye 1227). How could it? We no longer have an empire but we still have an Order of the British Empire and thus CBE stands for Commander of the Order of the British Empire. The Sunday Torygraph recently made the same mistake. I am saddened that you should drop to their level!

GRAHAM R. RITCHIE..

... When Diana Mosley said to Craig Brown (Diary, Eye 1227): "Name me one Jew who ever played the xylophone well, or even half-well", it awakened memories of Teddy Brown, who was always billed as "The World's Greatest Xylophonist" and often turned up on music hall bills in my youth. The fact that he was born Abraham Himmelbrand leads me to think that Diana may have overlooked him.

PAT NOLAN.

Pseudo names PS...

... Thank heavens you are to stop printing letters from people with silly names.

ABBOT FFIRKIN-THYME.

... I was disappointed to read of the demise of pseudo names. Some people clearly have no sense of humour!

MISS N.U. ALLREDDY.

... Unlike most of your recent letter writers, I thought the Pseudo Names section was hilarious and demonstrated the humour of the British public at their finest. My only regret was that I did not manage to send in a letter myself before the correspondence was closed.

MR BOAT.

... It's a pity that you closed the made-up names correspondence when you did – sooner or later one of them was bound to have been quite funny.

Who says so? I do.

LAURA VAVRIDGES.

Letter from **Delhi**

from Our Own Correspondent

AS WE try to tidy up after the Mumbai carnage in November, the concern here – and in London and Washington – is where the Pakistan-based Islamists will strike next.

The Mumbai attack was apparently the work of Lashkar-e-Taiba (aka LeT, or "Army of the Pure"), a group based near the eastern Pakistan border city of Lahore. None too privately, our security people also blame Pakistan's military and Inter Services Intelligence (ISI).

Western leaders, including Gordon Brown, have been shuttling between Delhi and Islamabad trying – somewhat disingenuously – to calm tempers. In reality they want to make sure our duplicitous neighbour has no pretext to switch troops from the fight against al Qaeda and the Taliban along its western border with Afghanistan to its eastern frontier with us.

But let us not forget the roots of this Islamic jihad which threatens to overwhelm South Asia, Afghanistan and eventually even the west: they lay in Washington's cynical, post-Vietnam attempt to contain the Soviet Union after its occupation of Afghanistan in 1979. The "death by a thousand cuts" policy of Zbigniew Brzezinski, national security adviser to oh-so liberal President Jimmy Carter, was designed to beggar Moscow, especially its oil- and mineral-rich Central Asian republics. Thus began the US love affair with the Islamists, which in turn embraced Pakistan's military junta headed by General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq. Still smarting from the loss of Bangladesh in 1971, Zia allied with the Great Satan to help build his influence in Afghanistan and Central Asia – in the process acquiring the military hardware and nuclear capacity that now so alarms our American brothers.

Islamists were to be the anti-Communist allies to throw the Red Army out of Kabul. The operation, known to its sponsors as "the Safari Club", brought together not just the US spooks and their Pakistani counterparts: the British, French, Israelis, Saudis, Sudanese and Algerians also played their part.

Praise be! The Soviets were expelled in 1989 and the Cold War was won. Alas, there followed a string of dirty wars in India's Kashmir province, Pakistan, Afghanistan (again), the Central Asian republics and Chechnya. The fall-out from victory spread as far as conflicts in Algeria and other parts of north and east Africa.

And then there was Islamist terror. LeT is just one of the radical offshoots from al Qaeda that emerged in the late 1980s but has its roots in Washington's Afghan policy. Its founder, Hafiz Mohammad Saeed, a professor at Lahore's University of Engineering and Technology, considers democracy one of the "menaces" inherited from an alien government to be demolished by all and any means.

His success has been to stay on the right side of those who count in Islamabad. He has never launched an attack in Pakistan and is widely held to have the quiet support of the likes of Pakistan's chain-smoking military chief and former ISI head Gen Asfaq Kayani. The US-trained Kayani is a brilliant strategist in covert affairs, more than capable of keeping Washington at bay and jihad simmering to achieve strategic leverage for Pakistan in a chaotic region.

He is ably assisted by bungled "coalition" efforts to find an escape route for their Afghan catastrophe. The US backs a peace dialogue that brings together "moderate" and "soft" Taliban factions – that is, those who promise to stop blowing up your soldiers – with assorted warlords and representatives of President Hamid Karzai's discredited government. Just as 20 years ago, these fine progressive elements are then armed to the teeth by the US to take on the radicals.

"Victory" then has left a terrifying legacy. Losing any war is bad: we just have to hope winning it this time will not be worse.

FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY **VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH**

●"While generally recognised as wrong, impolite, and coarse, the words 'fuck you' do not at all constitute a blasphemy," Judge Pierre Bouchard told the municipal court in Montreal. "By definition, a blasphemy must invoke God or sacred things. Blasphemy is saying things like 'calice de tabernacle' or cursing the Catholic Church, but saying 'fuck you' is not blasphemy, it's just an insult. When Charles-Yves Dupuy said 'fuck you' to the police officers, he was not contravening any bylaws against swearing in public, so they had no right to ask him for his name, or to arrest him for obstruction of justice when he refused to give it. He therefore has no case to answer."

Speaking after the collapse of the case against Mr Dupuy, ethnography professor Pierre Pichette explained that "among French Canadians, the big boss, the supreme authority, was always God. So cursing was a sort of verbal revenge against authority, and was punishable in law. English speakers typically swear by invoking sex and bodily functions, but the Quebecois tend to invoke the Catholic Church and its rituals. So it's not uncommon to hear French-language radio hosts casually throw around the F-word, even on Canada's public broadcaster, Radio-Canada." *(The Sudbury Star (Ontario), 8/11/08. Spotter: Wallace Brown)*

– ● –

● *"The modus operandi of the Train Theatre is quite simple," actor Rajan Varma explained to reporters on the platform of Jogeshwari station in Mumbai. "Ten drama units, each consisting of three actors, enter ten different compartments of a train at the same time, armed only with a railway ticket and a script. Once inside, they perform a play. If it's a slow train, they perform a three-minute play, if it's a fast train, they do an eight-minute play. Then they all get out at the next station, cross to another platform, and board another train. In this manner, they can perform to a total audience of between 75,000 and 100,000 passengers in the space of four hours."*

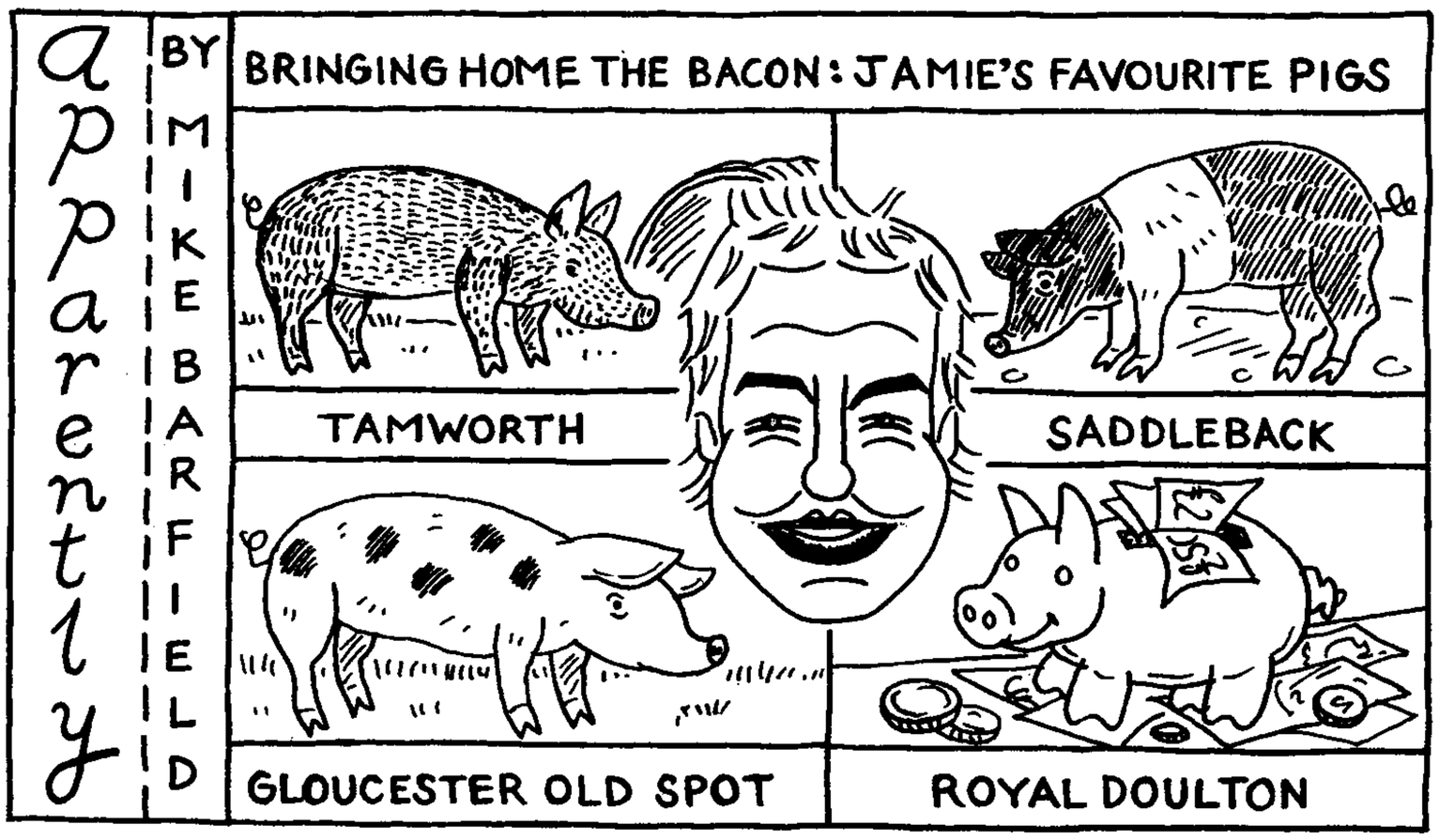
Explaining the origins of the Train Theatre, which has performed continuously in Mumbai since 1994, Varma added, "I was looking for a medium in which to tell people that we all belong to one big family, and trains, with their daily assurance of unlimited audience and limited time, fitted the bill perfectly. City dwellers want everything to be 'fast and small,' and that's what we offer. We have a repertoire of about 40 playlets, all of which can be performed in the gap between two stations. Many of the plays are sponsored, so we educate the public about anything from pollution to birth control while we are entertaining them." (Sunday Times [India], 23/11/08. Spotter: Priyal Sanghavi)

– ● –

●"I am no longer interested in the three-dimensional world," Taichi Takashita told reporters in Tokyo, "and much prefer the world of manga, anime films, and virtual reality games. I spend all my time interacting with two-dimensional characters, and I would even like to become a resident of the two-dimensional world. However, that is probably not completely possible with limited present-day technology, but at the very least, should it not be feasible to legally authorise marriages with two-dimensional characters? That's why I am launching my on-line petition, to gather one

million signatures, and force the government to establish a law on marriages with cartoon characters."

Within one week of launching the petition, Takashita had already gathered over 1,000 signatures. "For a long time now, I have only been able to fall in love with two-dimensional people," wrote one signatory, "and I currently have someone that I really love. Even though she is flat and fictional, it is still real love, and I would like to have legal approval for a full relationship with her. In Europe, they allow marriages between two men or two women, and in some countries you can marry an animal, but Japan still only permits marriage between one man and one woman. Isn't it time for our laws to move into the twenty-first century, and allow people with different numbers of dimensions to express their love?" *(ABC News [Australia], 30/10/08. Spotter: Mike Boumphrey)*



From The Message Boards

Members of the online community respond to the major issues of the day...

Government promises to increase social mobility

It boils down to what I call the survival of the fittest. My mother raised five children single-handedly and put us through university while holding down three low-paid cleaning jobs. All five of us are successful professionals, and now it is our turn to pay her back by supporting her in her old age. (Unlike us, she never possessed the ambition to improve her lot, and lives on disability benefits, paid for by our taxes.) – ***Jon***

Princes Charles and Harry's racial epithets reveal the key to a contented society: the royals regard themselves as superior beings and their friends are happy with this state of affairs. As loyal subjects they understand something that others seem to have forgotten: the princes were appointed, not by governments or boards of governors, but by God. The spin-doctors should stop apologising for royal banter and adjust their "message" accordingly. – ***Robert_"R"***

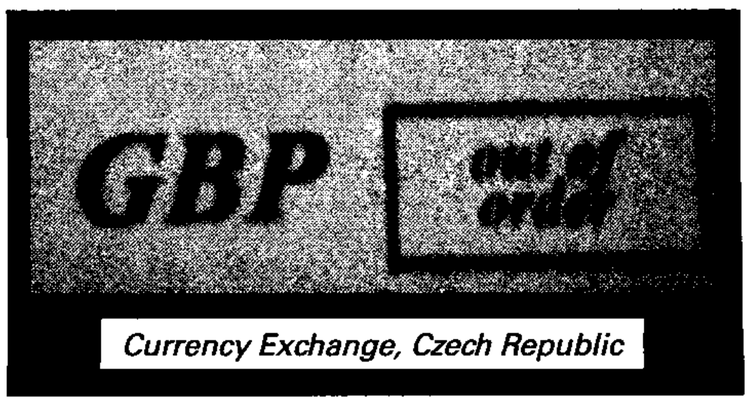
Problem today its 2 esy 2 b fame-us so kid's all want 2 jump on the celebrety band dragon ● big broth-er x fact-er coleen cheryl cole madeleine mccann baby p all celebrity's 4 doin noth-ing ● ● – ***Hunny_pot***

Celebritie's like Frank Lampard, Jodie Marsh and Alex from the Apprentice attend-ed private school's like my-self and past prolif-ic GCSE's. ☺ They workd hard for there succes. – ***Brain's_and_look's***

God help us. With his ghastly accent, Lampard should be working in Carpetphone Warehouse or some other beacon of New Labour's Paradise On Earth. – ***Brown_out***

The Girls' Schools Association hit the nail on the head: even well bred ladies aspire to "bag a footballer". In their mothers' day they would have bagged (and debagged!) a rugger man – most likely a doctor, lawyer, banker or, if desperate, an accountant. Now "pro" rugby is as bad as soccer – overpaid oiks waxing their scrotums and rubbing "moisturiser" into each other's buttocks. In my day you got a turd in your kitbag and Deep Heat in your underpants. Social mobility means one thing: degeneracy, effeminacy and national decline. – ***Zicka_Zimba***

Great stuff guys! – ***Bogbrush***



PRIME MINISTERIAL DECREE NO. 36

From the Desk of the Supreme Leader

Comrades,

In the midst of the winter gloom, there is a bright and shining ray of hope from across the Atlantic.

My very old friend and follower Comrade Obama has at last taken over at the White House, bringing to an end the dark and tyrannical rule of the neo-conist Rumsfeldite fascist warmonger Bush.

How appropriate it was that in the dying moments of this universally hated and despised regime we should have been treated to the humiliating spectacle of our own discredited former leader ex-Comrade Blair scurrying to Washington to indulge in a last shameless act of toadyism to the genocidal war criminal Bush.

Comrades will have found their stomachs heaving in revulsion, as they witnessed the sychophantic Blair bowing his head in order to have a worthless bauble pinned round his neck by the grinning Texan mass-murderer.

This so-called Presidential Medal of Freedom should more rightly be known as the Order of the Poodle, or the Order of the Running Dog (third class).

But let us not dwell any longer on this scene of utter degradation which can now be consigned to the dustbin of history.

How different things will be once a new "special relationship" is established between your Supreme Leader and the new Supreme Leader of the People's Republic of America.

Very soon now, possibly as early as 2011, I will be meeting Comrade President Obama to assure him of Britain's continuing support in whatever he does, both in his own country and in invading others, should he need to do so in order to destroy the Iranian weapons of mass destruction.

But let Comrades not forget that in everything he stands for, Comrade Obama has followed the lead set by your Supreme Leader.

He was only elected because he had the wisdom to adopt my slogan *"The Age of Change"*.

Since then he has taken up all my revolutionary ideas for rescuing the world from American stupidity through the doctrines of neo-Keynesian Brownist-Rooseveltism and Brownite-Darlingist bailoutism.

No wonder he is so popular! How could he fail to be such a success when he has the humility to seek the advice and political counsel of an older and more experienced world statesman?

When the history books come to be written, we can be sure that they will pay fitting tribute not only to myself as the Saviour of the World, but also to my faithful pupil and good friend, who can now properly be described as the first "Brown man ever to enter the White House" (my thanks for this very amusing joke are due to Comrade Alastair Campbell, who has now rejoined my team as Honorary Acting Agitprop-Czar).

Yours,

Gordon Brown

Supreme Leader

GOOD NEWS ON THE ECONOMY!

I am pleased to announce the creation of over two million new British jobs* – thanks to my decision to go ahead with the construction of the much-needed third runway for London's Heathrow Airport.

So much for the doomsayers and wreckers who are going round trying to undermine all I have done to save the British economy.

So much also for the Greenpeaceite Friends of Earthists who are trying to deprive Britain's hard-working families of the chance to enjoy much-needed rest and recreation in the health camps of Benidorm, Tenerife and Orlando, Florida.

So much also for the pathetic Luddite-Nimbyist protests of all those residents of the 29 villages which must be demolished to make way for this heroic addition to our national infrastructure.

These relics of a sentimentalist bygone age cannot hold up the historic inevitabilism of the "Heathrow Hub", which will enable millions of passengers from all over the world to change planes on their way to Abu Dhabi or Lusaka, purchasing cups of coffee in the transit lounge to the enormous benefit of those British transit lounge beverage workers who make such an invaluable contribution to the British economy in their implementation of the Starbuckist agenda.

This great construction project will not be confined just to the building of a runway, but is to include new terminals, new roads, new hotels, new conference centres, new shopping malls, new multi-storey car parks and the largest in-flight mosque in the world. G.B.

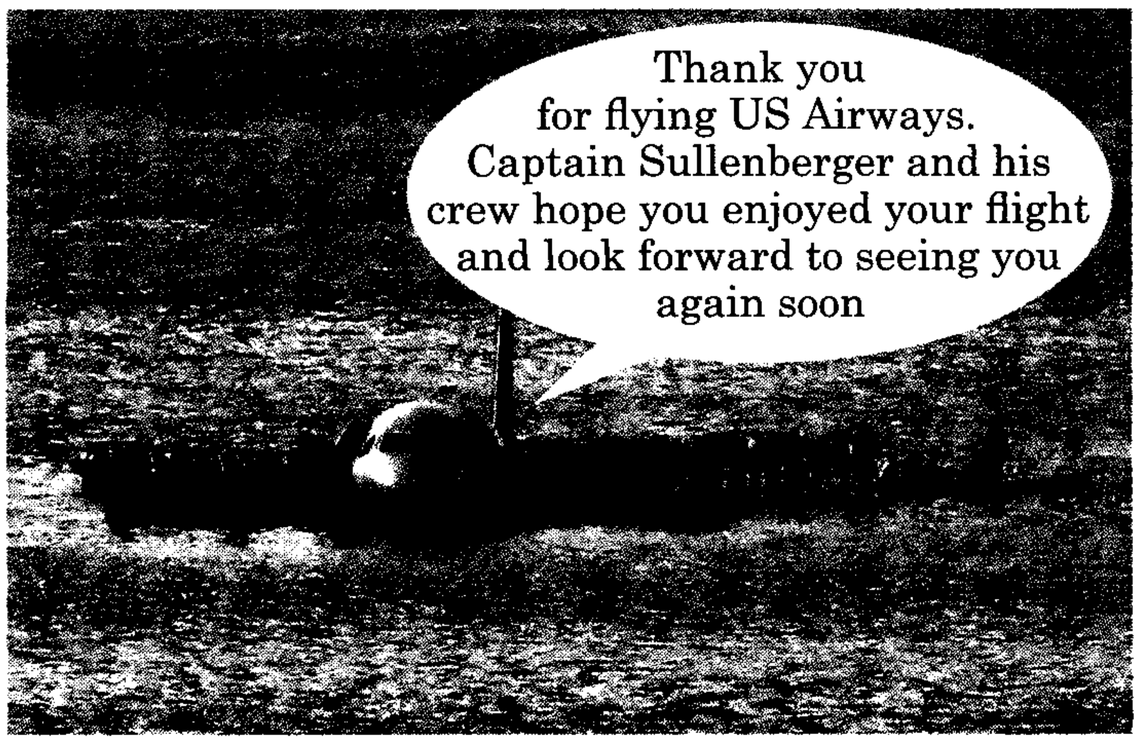
*The phrase "British jobs" in this context may obviously include "Jobs done in Britain by Poles, Ukranians, etc, etc."

COMRADE ALAN MILBURN
A Statement

I, Comrade Milburn, having been appointed "Class War Czar" by the Supreme Leader, wish to put on record that, after several years of re-education by the Party, I utterly repudiate my former Blairite tendencies and my other deviationist errors of the past. I am grateful to the Supreme Leader for his generosity in giving me a second chance to serve our Great Party in this vital new role of ensuring the final elimination of the hated Kulak class, and the ending of their privileged Middle Englandist domination of the professions and other centres of power. Be warned that in the Brownite Age of Change, lack of social mobility will no longer be tolerated. I therefore welcome the underprivileged spokesperson of the proletariat, Harriet Harman, to help me in this important work.

Comrade A. Milburn

(Signed of his own free will at 3am under the glare of a Party-approved low energy lightbulb)


Thank you
for flying US Airways.
Captain Sullenberger and his
crew hope you enjoyed your flight
and look forward to seeing you
again soon

BUSH ANNOUNCES 'WAR ON GEESE'

by Our Man In Washington **Rock Hudson-River**

IN A final speech, the outgoing President, George W. Bush, warned America that Al Qaeda-trained geese were responsible for a suicidal attack on an American passenger plane, flight 1549, which was brought down by a birdstrike after leaving New York airport.

Said the soon-to-be-ex-President, "We are going to kick goose. They can fly, but they can't hide. Er... Is it time for me to go now?"

On Other Pages

- Geese in Rendition Flight shock **2**
- Geese incarcerated at Guantanamo Bay **3**
- Video of Goosama Bin Laden pledging war on America **94**

NEW FEARS OVER HEATHROW NOISE

by Our Aviation Staff **Phil Skies**

PLANS to build a third runway at Heathrow have prompted new concerns about the level of noise at the airport. Said a BAA spokesman, "There are going to be all these protestors shouting at us day and night. It's going to be terrible and the noise level could reach unacceptable levels".

Said one building contractor, "We will be forced to wear ear plugs as we demolish these villages, in order to muffle the sound of eco-activists telling us that we are destroying the planet".

Worst of all, say runway supporters, is the boom of Boris Johnson, as he joins in the argument and roars *(cont. p. 94)*

POLITICAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Fortean Times

Woman Claims To Have Seen 'Little Green Shoots'

by Our UFO Staff **Andrew Mars**

EXPERTS were baffled last night when a British woman, Shriti Vadera, claimed that she had seen "green shoots" appearing in the UK economy.

On Another Planet

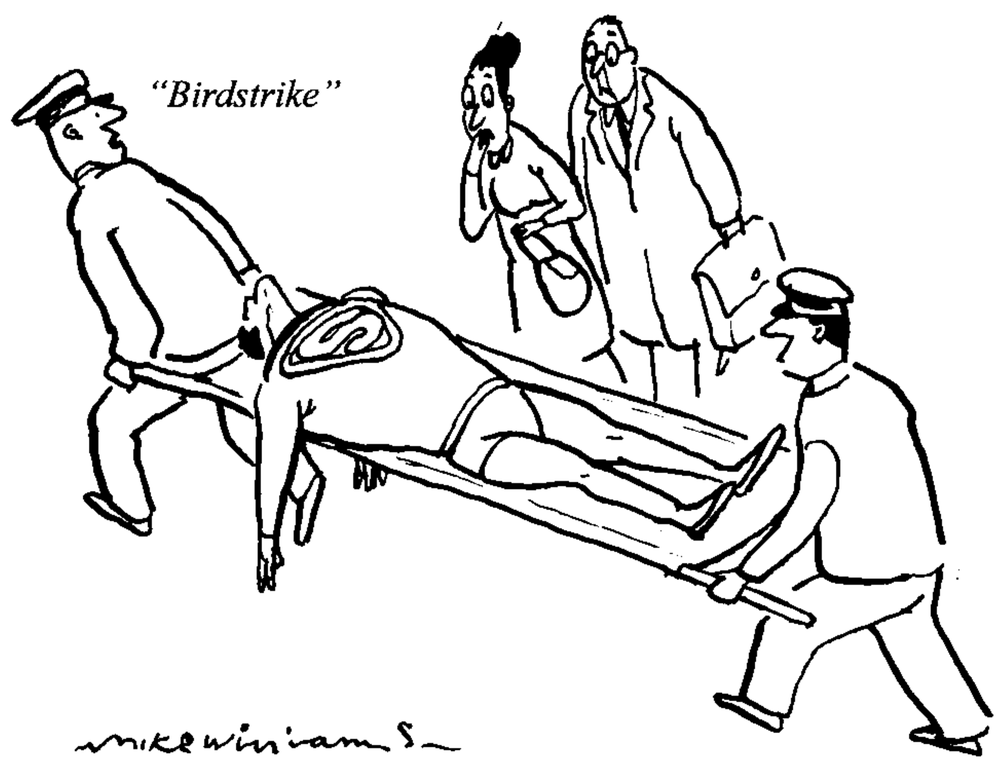
Said Ms Vadera, "I saw a mysterious light at the end of the tunnel and then these little green shoots appeared."

She continued, "I know it sounds crazy, but they were really there and I experienced a strange sensation of wellbeing. The shoots seemed to have a message for us that everything was going to turn out ok."

Sceptics, however, were quick to pour scorn on Ms Vadera's sighting. Said Professor Vince Cable from *The Sky TV At Night*, "There is no evidence for the existence of UFOs – Unidentified Financial Opportunities – and I'm afraid that this sad woman has been fabricating these stories in order to draw attention to herself.

Outer Waste of Space

"What she may have seen," he conceded, "is a little Brown man telling her to go and find some good news."



WRITE YOUR OWN OBAMA SPEECH

Cut out the words and assemble in random order

HEY PRESTO!

YOU ARE THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES!

Advertisement

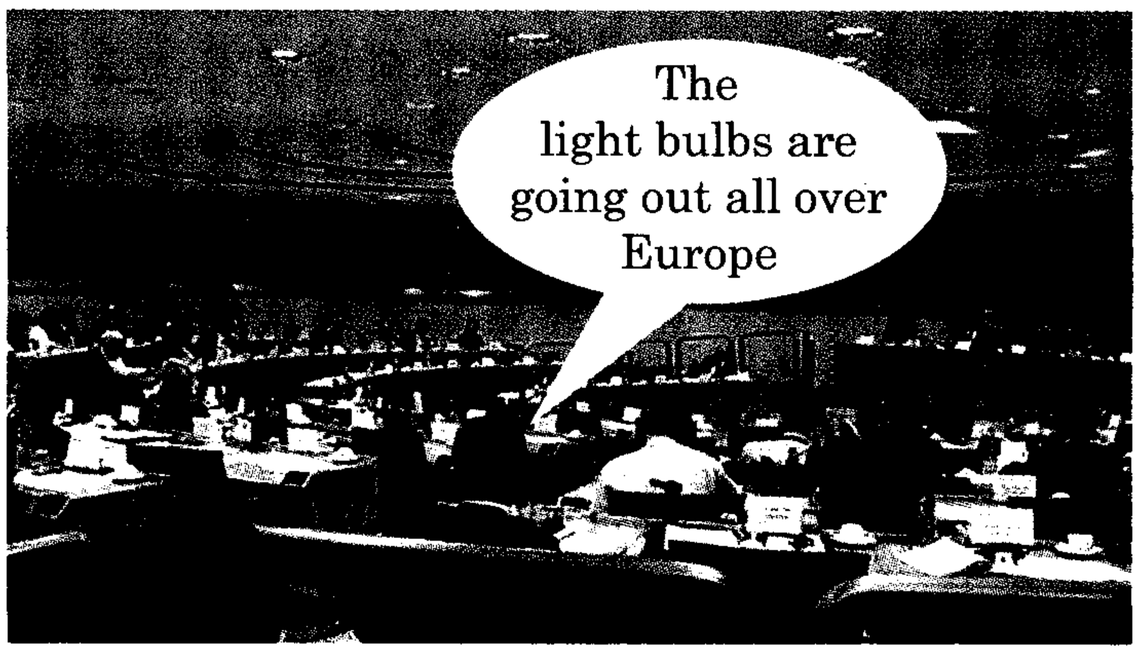
A PRICELESS heirloom to be treasured by your children and your children's children. This genuine 100 Watt electric lightbulb with bayonet fitting has been crafted by the traditional lightbulb makers of old Taiwan and is now uniquely on offer to Private Eye readers as an eternal memory of a bygone age.

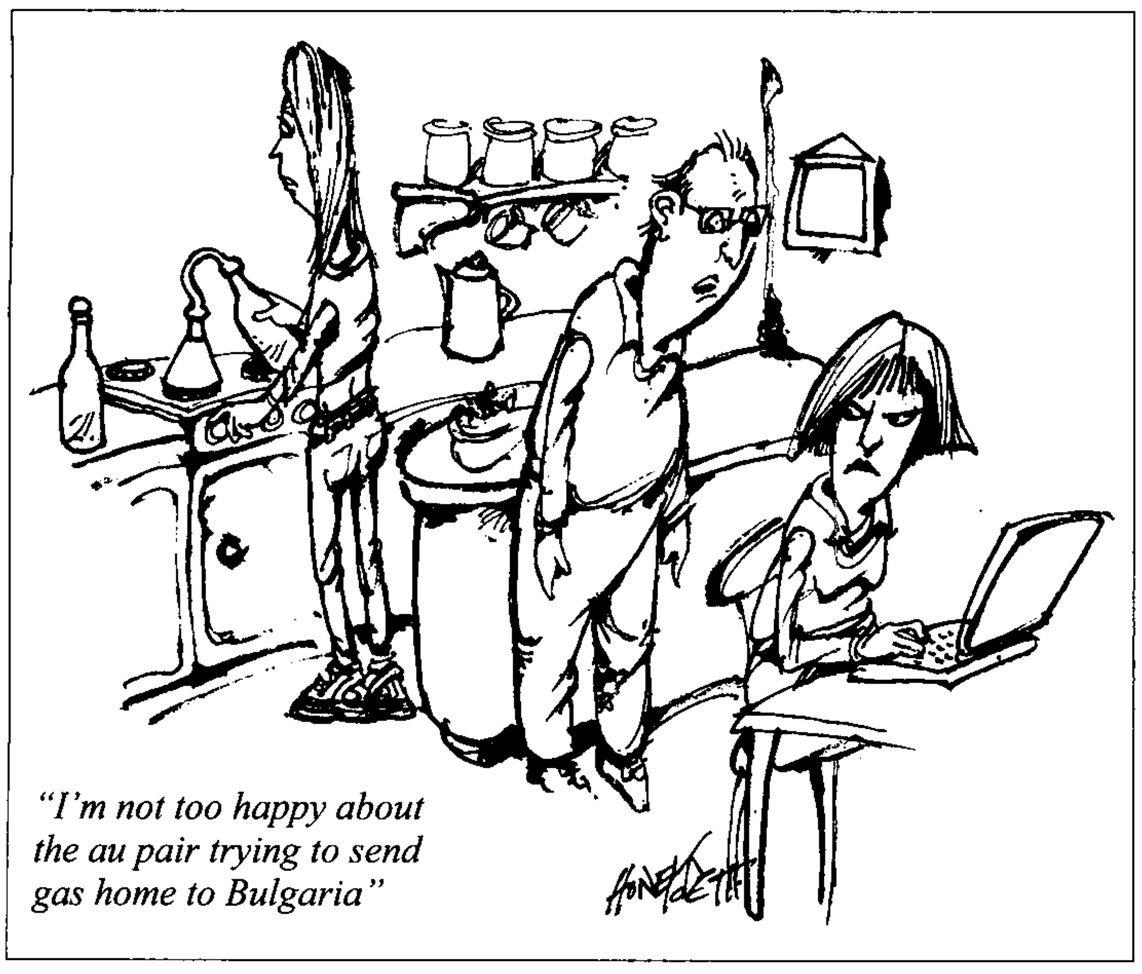
Each lightbulb comes in a unique numbered cardboard box for you to cherish in the long dark winters to come.

Apply at once to avoid disappointment to: Gnome Lightbulb Offer, Unit 94, The Osram Trading Estate, Billericay, enclosing a cheque for £99.99 for each historic bulb.

Says Antiques Road Show's FIONA BRUCE, "With this lightbulb you will be able to see my legs very clearly".

GREAT MOMENTS IN HISTORY





"I'm not too happy about the au pair trying to send gas home to Bulgaria"

Let's Parlez Franglais!

avec Le Late Kilometres Kington

Numero 94 Dans Le Maternity Ward

Docteur: Beaucoup de congratulations, Madame Dati! C'est une fille!

Rachida Dati *(pour c'est elle)*: Taxi!

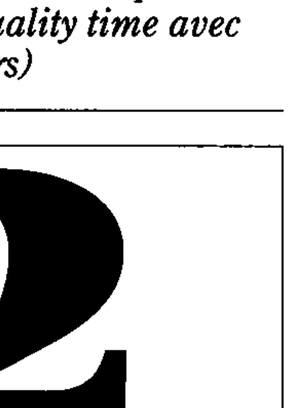
Docteur: Mais hangez-vous-on! Ou êtes-vous going?

Dati: Back à travail. Tout de suite. If not plus soon.

Docteur: Mais n'avons pas coupez le cord umbilical yet!

Dati: Il n'y a pas de temps for all cette nonsense. Je suis très modern et feminist et also un Minister important dans le gouvernment de Nicolas "Sexy" Sarkozy!

Docteur: Ah! Maintenant je comprends. Nurse! Bringez les high heels et le leopardskin jacket et le hairdryer et le make-up.



Dati: Au revoir Docteur!

Docteur: Un more chose, Madame! Je dois completer le birth certificate pour le petit bébé. Qui est le father?

Dati: Mindez votre own business!

Docteur: Zut alors! C'est David Blunkett, n'est-ce pas, le famous politician Anglais?

(Exit Madame Fruti pour spender some quality time avec les photographers)

Exclusive to the Sun

WOMAN 'BORN WITH TWO BREASTS'

JOURNALISTS were last night hailing a medical miracle after reports were confirmed that a woman had been born with two breasts.

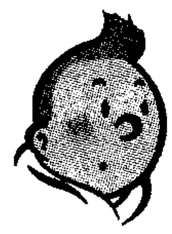
The woman, who turned up to an awards ceremony wearing a skimpy dress, was featured very heavily in all newspapers.

Sub-editors have welcomed the development, saying the chances of a woman being born with two breasts can be as small as 99.999%.

2 THE TIMES

Is Matthew Parris Straight? asks Tintin

FOR years it has been assumed that the boyish reporter with the funny hair is gay – but surely, says Tintin, this is to miss all the obvious signs **94**



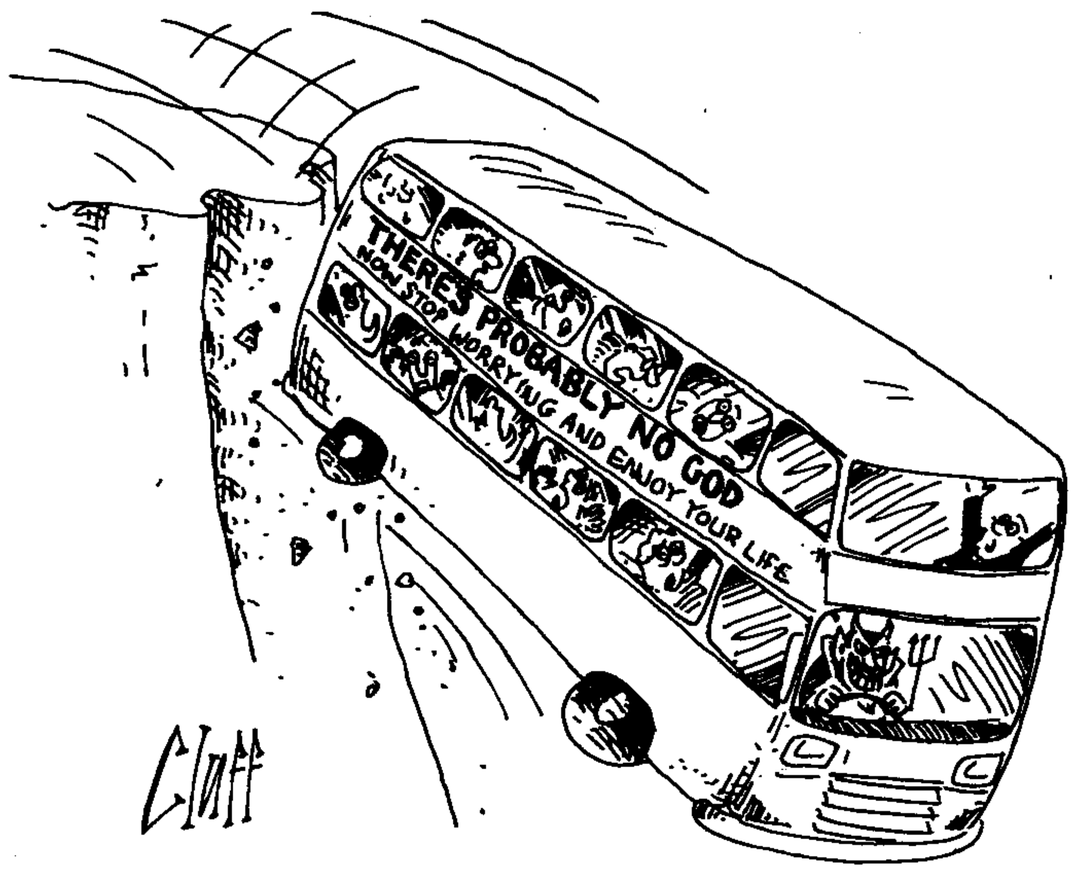
Advertisement

PRIMARK

FINAL REDUCTIONS IN FACTORIES NOW

WE'VE SLASHED THE MINIMUM WAGE IN FACTORY TO 1972 LEVELS!

- ★ Machinist jobs: wages reduced to two pounds an hour for a ninety-hour week
- ★ **Sewing jobs: wages slashed even further**
- ★ ***But hurry, these crazy wages can't last***
- ★ So, if you've just entered Britain clinging to the bottom of the Eurostar get down to your nearest Primark factory now for a bargain job
- ★ **Primark – amazingly low quality everyday jobs at incredibly low quality wages**



CAMERON'S NEW BIG BEAST SHADOW CABINET IN FULL

Shadow Business Secretary **Kenneth Clarke**
Shadow Economic Spokesman **Norman Lamont**
Shadow Minister for Flu **Iain Duncan-Cough**
Shadow Minister for Bicycles **Lord "Normo" Tebbit**
Shadow Minister for the Elderly **Lady Thatcher**
Shadow Minister for "Never-Having-It-So-Dead" **The Late Harold Macmillan** *(That's enough Big Beasts. Ed.)*

● ***Have you seen a Big Beast in your neighbourhood? Just follow our guide and then let us know.***

THE BIG BEAST Those Ten Tell-tale Signs

1. Quite fat
2. Cigar smoke
3. Hush Puppies
4. Jazz music
5. Er...
6. Big
7. Beastly
8. Er...
9. Er...
10. That's it.

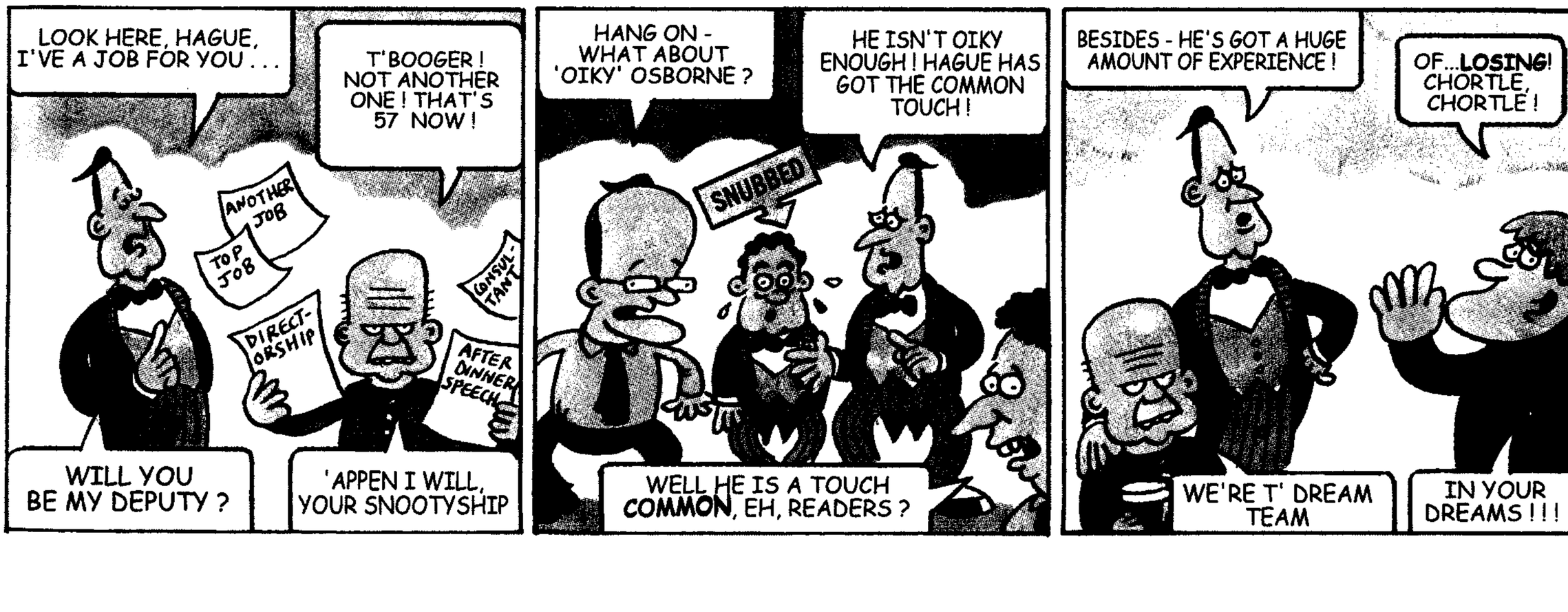
THE BOOK OF EHUD

Chapter 94

1. And, lo, the war continued, even unto the twenty-second day.
2. And Ehud looked upon it and saw that it was good.
3. And many of the Hamas-ites were smote and their houses laid low, and in the streets of Gaza there was the traditional wailing and gnashing of teeth.
4. And the final score of those that were slain was as follows:
5. Those of ye who wanted not to know looketh away now.
6. Dwellers in Gaza – thirteen hundred. Children of Israel – thirteen.
7. Which is to say an hundredfold.
8. Then said Ehud, son of Olmert, "Let us *now* declare an cease-fire.
9. "For, lo, we have achieved our objective.
10. "Which was to get a quick war in before Obama cometh.
11. "For Barack, son of Obama, may not looketh so kindly on our smiting as did Dubya, that is called the Burning Bush."
12. And so it came to pass that the smiting ceased.
13. And the children of Israel said to themselves, "Great is Ehud for he hath prevailed over the Hamas-ites."
14. But the Hamas-ites, as ye mighteth expect, said to *themselves,* "Great is Hamas for we have prevailed over the might of Israel."
15. And all the nations of the world talketh amongst themselves, saying, "Something must be done – though quite *what,* we knoweth not what it is."
16. And Ehud said, "Fear not, O Children of Israel, for as I promised at the outset of the smiting we have stopped the rockets of Qassam from falling upon the cities of the South."
17. But even as he spake, a mighty rocket landeth in the outskirts of the city of Askelon.
18. And Ehud pondereth on this and hopeth that no one would notice.

(To be continued)

Dave Snooty AND HIS PALS


LOOK HERE, HAGUE, I'VE A JOB FOR YOU . . .
T'BOOGER! NOT ANOTHER ONE! THAT'S 57 NOW!
ANOTHER JOB
TOP JOB
DIRECT-ORSHIP
CONSUL-TANT
AFTER DINNER SPEECH
WILL YOU BE MY DEPUTY?
'APPEN I WILL, YOUR SNOOTYSHIP
HANG ON - WHAT ABOUT 'OIKY' OSBORNE?
HE ISN'T OIKY ENOUGH! HAGUE HAS GOT THE COMMON TOUCH!
SNUBBED
WELL HE IS A TOUCH COMMON, EH, READERS?
BESIDES - HE'S GOT A HUGE AMOUNT OF EXPERIENCE!
OF...LOSING! CHORTLE, CHORTLE!
WE'RE T' DREAM TEAM
IN YOUR DREAMS!!!

"And the award for Best Actress goes to..."

BRITISH STAR IN EMOTIONAL US AWARDS CEREMONY

BY OUR SHOWBIZ STAFF KATE WINSLOTTS

MILLIONS of Americans watched in awe last night as a British actor accepted the most prestigious show-business honour America has to offer.

Awarding the Presidential Medal of Freedom to his old friend Tony Blair, President Bush announced that this high honour was given to the former British premier for "Best Supporting Role In The Invasion Of Iraq" (2003).

Plainly overcome with embarrassment and wishing he wasn't there, Blair was barely able to speak as the President placed the medal around his neck.

Golden Global War

The cynical Washington press corps could not believe their eyes. "In all my years reporting these ceremonies," said one seasoned veteran, Hiram J. Toadburger of the *Cincinnati Bee*, "I have never seen a man make such a fool of himself."

Full story and pictures 8-14

"There's probably no bus"

POETRY SPECIAL CORNER

In Memoriam Sir John Mortimer QC

So. Farewell
Then
John Mortimer

Author, Playwright,
Barrister and
Bon viveur.

You were most
Famous as the creator of
Rumpole of the
Bailey,

A poetry-loving barrister
Just like
Yourself.

Now you must
Go before
The greatest judge
Of all.

He who must
Be obeyed.

I hope you
Have prepared your
Case
And that he
Likes your books.

Then you
Will get off.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

In Memoriam Patrick McGoohan

So. Farewell
Then Patrick
McGoohan.

You were famous as
Number Six in
The Prisoner.

"Be seeing you" –
That was your
Catchphrase.

But we won't
Any more.

Who is Number One?

You probably
Have that information
Now that you
Really are
A free man.

E. J. Thribb (aka 17½
readers who sent this in)

In Memoriam David Vine, TV Presenter

So. Farewell
Then David
Vine, BBC
Sports commentator.

You will be remembered
For *Question Of Sport*.

"What happens
Next?" You used
To ask.

It is a question
We would now
Like to ask you.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

In Memoriam Tony Hart, Artist and Broadcaster

So. Farewell
Then Tony
Hart.

So many people
Have died
This week that
It is very
Difficult to think
Of anything else
To say.

Keith suggests
That it is
All too
Hart-breaking.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

Lines On The Departure From Office Of President George W. Bush

So. Farewell
Then George W. Bush,
Forty-third President of
The USA.

We never did discover
What the "W"
Stood for.

Keith says it was
"Warmonger".

Keith does say
Some very silly things
At times.

Eric J. Thribb (17½)

WORLD LEADERS UNITE TO CONDEMN 'OUTRAGE'

by Our Entire Staff

ANGER. Outrage. Disbelief. These were just some of the words being used last night to describe the universal reaction to the shocking event which has rocked the civilised world to its foundations.

From all the four corners of the earth came a swelling chorus of protest against what one world leader called "a crime against humanity without parallel in our time".

Harry, Harry While Royal Family Lasts

At the heart of the world crisis was a home-made video, showing a beaming Prince Harry referring to a fellow officer as "my little Paki friend".

News of this astonishing outburst quickly spread around the entire globe, sparking protest demonstrations in places as far afield as Tehran, Pitcairn and Tierra del Fuego.

In Pakistan, a mob several thousand strong burned down the British Embassy, while in Gaza, supporters of Hamas vented their fury at Prince Harry by firing rockets into Jerusalem.

Just Wild About Harry

At the United Nations in New York, an emergency meeting of the Security Council passed a resolution unanimously condemning the Prince's remarks, calling for him to withdraw immediately and face charges of genocidal hatred before the International Criminal Court.

Also quick to condemn the Prince was **Vladimir Putin**, the Czar Of All The Russians, who turned off all gas supplies to

Europe in protest, warning that they would not be reconnected again until the bill was paid.

What A Harry-On

Another world statesman quick to deplore the Prince's outburst was Zimbabwean President **Robert Mugabe**, who declared, "This is yet further proof that Britian has descended into a new Dark Ages, where its unelected leaders murder people openly in the streets".

In St Peter's Square, Rome, millions of pilgrims heard **Pope Benedict XVI** proclaiming that his "heart was saddened by the news of this shameful and blasphemous outburst". He called upon all Christians throughout the world to join in prayer for the Prince's redemption from "such a grievous sin".

President-elect **Obama**, however, declined to comment, stating that as soon as he entered the White House it would be at the top of his priorities.

Prince Harry is 19.

Letters to the Editor

Prince Harry

From Sir Herbert Gussett.

Sir, As one who has served in the Armed Forces as a regular soldier, I find it extraordinary that anyone should take offence at the type of harmless, good-natured barrack-room banter which would be only too familiar to anyone who has had the privilege of taking the Queen's (or, as it was in my day, King's) Shilling.

I well remember the time when I was serving in the Western Desert in 1942, when the Eighth Army was kicking Rommel for six. I can see still see my old comrades' faces in my mind's eye as clearly as if they were standing before me now – Lieutenant "Chalky" Black, Major "Poofy" Huffington, Captain "Lofty" Smallbottom, and our irrepressible and much-loved colleague from India, Prince "Nig-Nog" Brahmaputra. Indeed even I had my own affectionate sobriquet, "Snorter" Gussett, a reference I believe to my fondness for knocking back the odd dram or two, which of course in those dark times were few and far between.

But let me stress that there was nothing remotely offensive in the use of these playful "noms-de-guerre", which only occasionally gave rise to acts of violence between us.

Prince Harry should be saluted for keeping alive one of the oldest and most honourable of our military traditions.

SIR HERBERT GUSSETT
(Maj. Gen. Retd), The Old Khazi, Bagshot, Beds.

From Mr Michael Giggler.

Sir, I've got some advice for Prince Harry. Why don't you "Paki-tin"?

MIKE GIGGLER
(Via email).

Can The British Army Survive This New Blow?

Asks General Sir Patrick Corduroy-Trouser

IN THE 1,000-year-long history of the British Army, this ancient and universally-respected fighting force has weathered many a storm.

We think of Agincourt, Waterloo, Paddington, Port Stanley.

But there is now a threat to its survival greater than that of war itself.

Prince Harry's foolish and irresponsible comments, coming as they do from someone who is third in line to the throne, have so damaged the Army's reputation that it is doubtful whether it can ever *(cont. p. 94)*

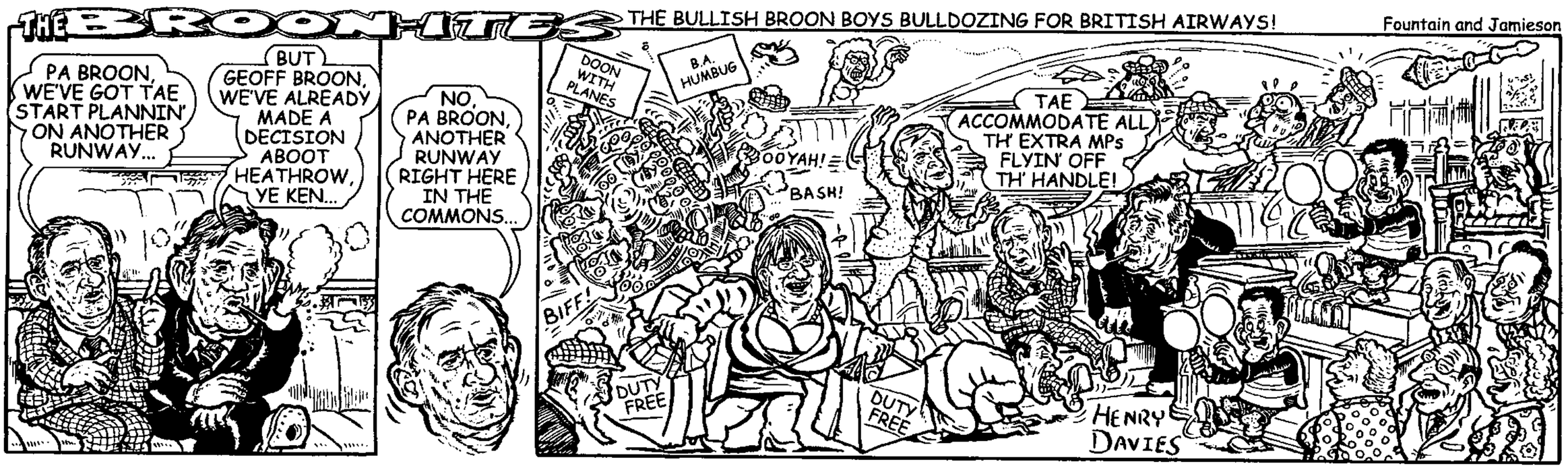
Harry's Racist Shame – Is This The End For The Royals?

Asks world-famous historian Sir Max Hastings

IN THE 1,000-year-long history of Britain's monarchy, this ancient and venerable institution has weathered many a storm.

It has survived civil war, abdication, divorces and every kind of scandal – and every time it has come through, battered but unbowed and stronger than ever.

But the news that Prince Harry has *(cont. p. 94)*


THE BROON-ITES
THE BULLISH BROON BOYS BULLDOZING FOR BRITISH AIRWAYS!
Fountain and Jamieson
PA BROON, WE'VE GOT TAE START PLANNIN' ON ANOTHER RUNWAY...
BUT GEOFF BROON, WE'VE ALREADY MADE A DECISION ABOOT HEATHROW, YE KEN...
NO, PA BROON, ANOTHER RUNWAY RIGHT HERE IN THE COMMONS...
DOON WITH PLANES
B.A. HUMBUG
OOYAH!
BASH!
BIFF!
DUTY FREE
DUTY FREE
TAE ACCOMMODATE ALL TH' EXTRA MPs FLYIN' OFF TH' HANDLE!
HENRY DAVIES

News In Brief

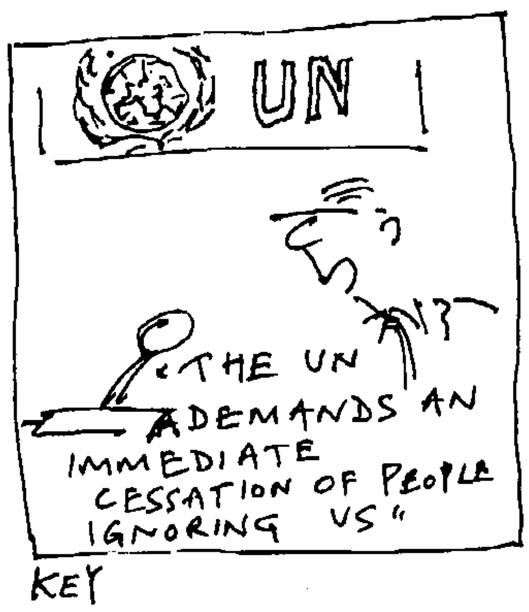
OBAMA – NEW TRIUMPH

BARACK OBAMA is the most popular President of all time, according to a new poll.

A survey conducted by Youmakeitup has seen him top the poll by some million billion percent.

"His place in history as the most popular President of all time is secure as long as he doesn't do something stupid," said an excitable man in a bow-tie. "Like becoming President."

(Reuters)



BALLS PLAN

SCHOOLS Secretary Ed Balls has unveiled £10,000 recruitment packages aimed at attracting and keeping lousy teachers at high-flying schools.

"After ten years of abject failure, we've realised that it's a complete waste of time trying to attract good teachers to schools on run-down inner-city sink estates," Mr Balls told the Commons.

"So now we're concentrating our efforts on hampering bright children by giving them a truly lousy educational experience.

"It's the only way that we can achieve a level playing field. Not that we have any playing fields left, but it's a metaphor."

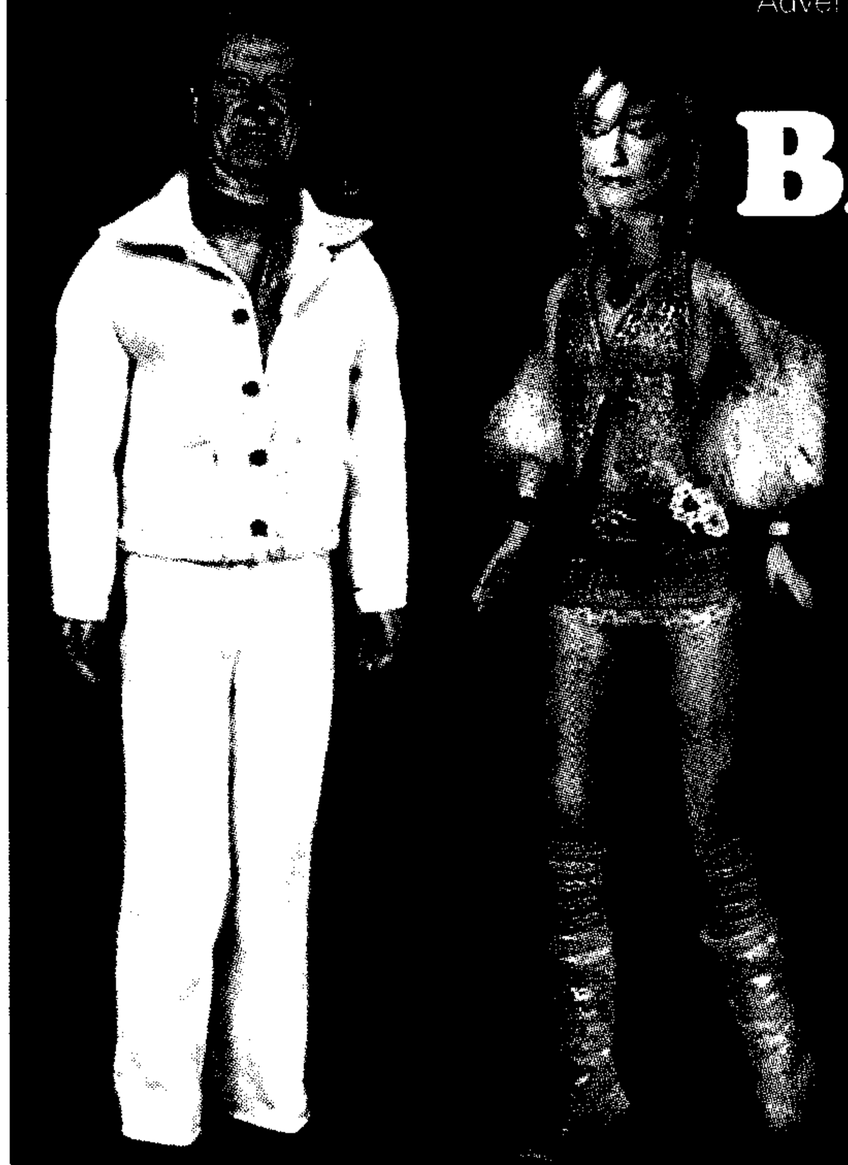
(Reuters)

CINEMA

Mr Milibean's Holiday (PG)

FUN starts when Mr Milibean goes to India and mistakes a sacred cow for the Indian Prime Minister. "How Now Brown Cow" he says in one of the great lines that will have you running out of the cinema to buy tickets for Oliver.

Advertisement



NEW FROM MATTEL

BARBIE and JOHN

The New Must-Have Doll Set

Hilarious fun for all the family, as they play "Barbie (Orr) and John (Cleese)"

John comes with
- ❤ Hair transplant
- ❤ New teeth
- ❤ Vitamin pills
- ❤ Fat wallet

Barbie comes with
- ❤ Blonde hair
- ❤ Sexy voice
- ❤ Gold-digging equipment
- ❤ Large mouth

Price: £2m (on divorce)

The G'Daily Telegraph

Friday, January 23, 2009

Strewth! Pom Rag To Be Subbed Down Under!

By Lunchtime Oz-Booze and Jacob S. Creek

THE Daily Telegraph, Britain's premier quality broadsheet, is to outsource its sub-editing functions to Australia, it was announced last night by the Telegraph's owners, Gilbert and George Barclay.

The shock move, which follows the sacking of hundreds of useless Poms, who are no better at subbing than they are at playing cricket or rugby, is the latest desperate attempt by the failing Pommie paper to cut costs as the circulation plummets faster than a shot Koala topples out of a eucalyptus tree.

But to be quite honest, mate, we might as well edit the whole bloody thing down here – jeez, you couldn't do worse than the guy they've got in now. I gather he likes a few tubes of the amber liquid... Lewis, is that the bloke's name...?

Anyway, that's the story, and unbelievably, it's true. So here's a few items you'll be reading in the new G'Daily Telegraph:

- *100 free DVDs of Baz Luhrman's masterpiece "Australia" with every copy sold* **1**
- *New-look Letters Page, entitled "Whingeing Poms"* **16**
- *New Quick Crossword – only one clue, 1 ac. leaping marsupial (8 letters, hint: not "wallaby")* **94**.

the PREMIERSH*TS
PAUL WOOD
HE'S A TERRIFIC FOOTBALLER, IT WOULD BE GREAT TO SEE HIM IN THE PREMIER LEAGUE
CITY OFFER KAKA £500,000 A WEEK WAGES
YEH, IMAGINE THE INFLUENCE HE'D HAVE ON THE OTHER PLAYERS...
UTD BOARD
RONALDO
I'M PLAYER OF THE YEAR AND I ONLY GET £120,000?!
CHELSEA BOARD
LAMPARD
I DESERVE AT LEAST HALF OF WHAT KAKA GETS!
L'POOL BOARD
GERRARD
HOW CAN I LIVE ON JUST £120K?
ARSENAL BOARD
ADEBAYOR
I JUST WANT A FAIR RATE
ETC...

GOVERNMENT RECESSION 'GUARANTEE SCHEME'

by Our Economics Correspondent **Crunchtime O'Booze**

GORDON Brown last night unveiled a new recession guarantee scheme which would guarantee this recession was every bit as bad as the Tory recession of the early 80s.

"Our New Labour recession guarantee is cast-iron and will deliver a recession that is both deeper and longer lasting than the last conservative one," a beaming Gordon Brown told reporters.

"We have consulted widely with business and union leaders at a number of pointless 'summits' and they agree that only Labour has the half-baked policies in place to deliver a deep and long lasting recession.

ON OTHER PAGES: Government says no to "Bad Bank" Scheme – "We've got lots of those already." **2** Is Trillion the New Billion? asks Briony Gordon **94**

"This government has really increased social mobility and equality. You were a banker, I worked in Zavvi, now we're both tramps"

EXCLUSIVE TO ALL PAPERS

That All-purpose Recession Piece In Full

SALES RISE/SLUMP SIGNALS DEEPENING OF RECESSION

AN unexpectedly sharp rise/slump in sales at the retail giant Waitrescobury's over Christmas was the clearest signal yet, according to industry figures, that the recession was deepening at a furious pace.

"By spending/not spending their money in this desperate way, shoppers are sending out the clearest possible signal that Britain stands at the edge of an abyss which will see every retailer in the country going bankrupt by June."

On Other Pages

● A new study released this week has revealed that drinking moderate amounts of alcohol whilst pregnant is completely safe/certain to mean your child will grow up to be a raging alcoholic of George Best proportions.

"The January Sales aren't what they used to be"

GLENDA SLAGG

The Gal Who Drives Away The Gloom!

■ **MADONNA! Who does she think she is!?! Well past fifty and showing us her crotch yet again!?! Gor Blimey!?! As if we haven't seen it a thousand times before – and, believe me, Madge, it isn't looking any better!?! Take a tip from Auntie Glenda, dearie, put a pair of trousers on and Zimmer yourself into the Sunset Home where you belong!?!!**

■ HATS OFF to Madonna?!!??! She may be past fifty but I say she puts girls half her age to shame!?! And what a crotch!?! It's never looked better – if you ask me she should keep her trousers off even when she's in the Sunset Home pushing herself round on her Zimmer!?!

■ **POSH!?! Who does she think she is?! Madonna?!!?! Taking off her trousers and showing us her crotch!??! Put 'em back on, darlin', and give us all a break!!?!**

■ THREE cheers for Posh – she's not afraid to take her trousers off and show us her crotch!!? No wonder Madonna is looking so crotchety (Geddit?) 'cos when it comes to showing your crotch, Posh is in a class of her own!!!?

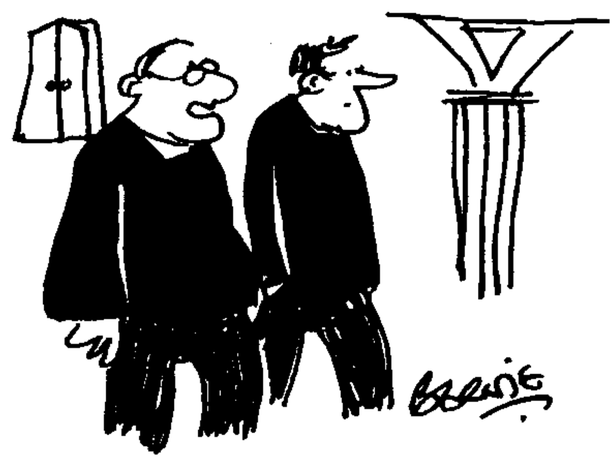
■ *HERE THEY ARE – Glenda's Downturn Dreamboats!?!*

● **Boy George.** OK, you're in prison but you can chain me up, Big Boy (and I mean *Big*) any time!!?!

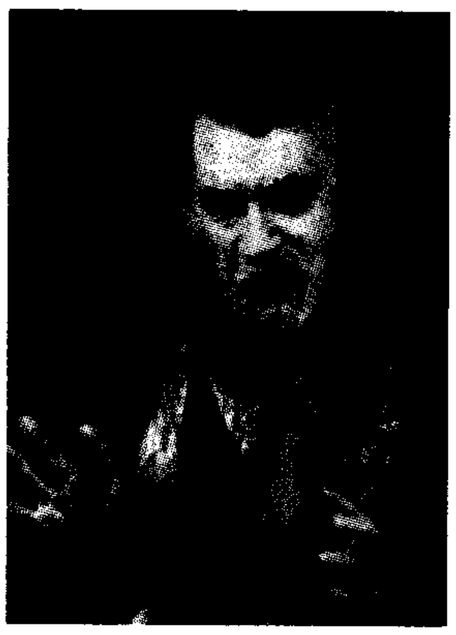
● **John McDonnell MP.** He's the gorgeous guy who grabbed the Mace in the House of Commons, stoopid!?! Mmmm!! I'd like to grab *your* mace, Johnny (Geddit?) and we can Third Runaway together!?! Geddit?!!?

● **Captain Chesley B. Sullenberger III.** Crazy name, quite a sensible guy!?!

Byeee!!



"I find that in a recession people come back to the church – that's the third silver chalice we've had stolen this month"



Mr Has-Bean: Picking pockets

DICKENS REVIVAL TAKES LONDON BY STORM

by Our Showbiz Staff **Phil Seats**

YES, IT'S HERE! The 19th Century is back with its grinding poverty, hungry masses and soaring crime rates.

Revived by Gordon Brown, this grim version of Dickensian Britain has returned in triumph and is set to run for a very long time indeed.

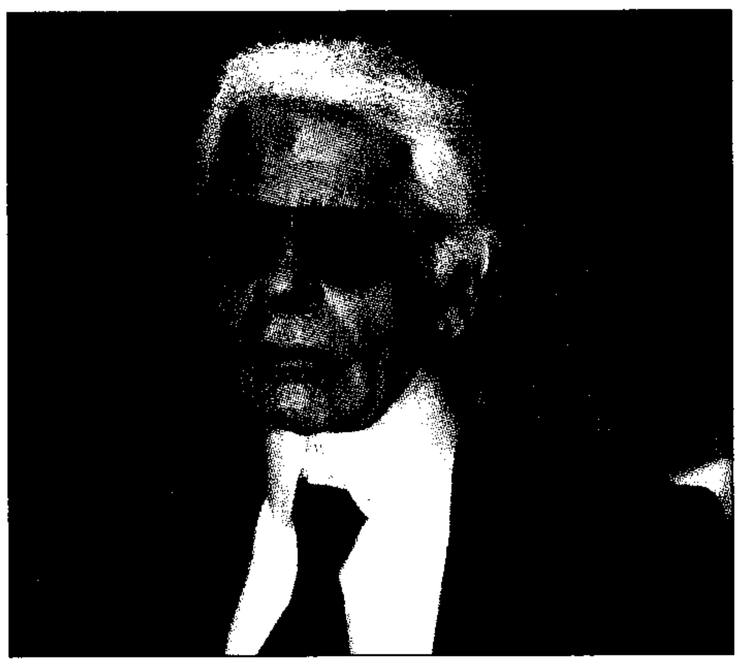
Critics have hailed this classic feel-bad story of workhouse conditions, misery and depression as the perfect antidote to the musical "Oliver", with its optimistic songs and happy-go-lucky characters.

THOSE SONGS IN FULL

- **Fired, glorious fired!**
- **Be sacked soon!** ♫
- **Consider yourself homeless**
- **I'm reviewing the Situations Vacant column**
- **I'd do anything** (for money)
- **Who will buy something?**
- **Boom-pah-pah, Bust-pah-pah!** ♫

And many more!

DIARY



KARL LAGERFELD

If you want to wear a headband, you must commit suicide immediately. But I beg you do not put a headband on before you do yourself away with, hm? To be seen dead in a headband is such a bore.

I am reinventing the umbrella. In the 80s and 90s, people they used umbrellas just to keep off the rain, hm? But that is so démodé. Who are the only people who need to keep off the rain? I tell you who – the people who walk in the streets. And who walks in the streets anymore, hm? No-one! They have no need to walk, their chauffeur or their pilot, they take them everywhere. So please do not tell me an umbrella is necessary to keep off the rain. If you need an umbrella to keep off the rain, you should destroy yourself immediately, you are quite ghastly.

I have always been mad for the elbow. An elbow is a gorgeous thing. And the elbow patch! The elbow patch is genius! Think of the British country gentleman in his tweed coat with his elbow patch. So chic, so trendy, so sexy! So how do I reinvent the umbrella? I reinvent the umbrella as an elbow patch!

I have a small umbrella – open, of course! please do not be stupid! – attached to my left elbow and another small umbrella attached to my right elbow. So when I sit down at table I am sure no-one else can come too close to me or they will be spiked on the chin by my umbrella.

I am now going everywhere with an umbrella open above my head, but only indoors. Outdoors, my umbrella has its own umbrella, so it does not get wet and dowdy. Have you seen that movie – Mary Poppins? Mary Poppins will be so huge next year, with her umbrella. And the men, they will put my new range of soot upon their faces, and dance around like the chimney-sweeps, no question.

I'm mad for the economic downturn! Mad for it! Mass unemployment is so sexy, hm? When the economic graph swoops down like that, like a curve from Fragonard, I think it is so gorgeous, so trendy! My new evening wear range for Chanel is a wonderful homage to that curve, with all my clothes with downturns off the shoulders in dark, dark greys and delicious blacks.

They talk of green shoots of recovery! How disgusting! Green shoots are so ugly, so passé. When I see a green shoot in my garden, I have my gardener to get rid of it. "Dig it up and destroy it!" I tell him. I have no time for the Spring, it is the most vulgar and pretentious month. Hope and optimism? So Nineties. So démodé.

Karl's Top Five Tips for Surviving the Credit Crunch:

1. **Don't eat.** Eating is so Seventies and this is Today. I eat only celery and even that I am not enjoying. Pale green is so uninteresting.

2. **Dismiss your assistant chauffeur**. No-one has an assistant chauffeur any more. Assistant chauffeurs are so *yesterday*.

3. **You do not need more than 200 white shirts at any one time**. Anything more is excessive. I threw the rest of them away when I heard of the arrival of the credit crunch and I tell you I felt so *good* about myself!

4. **Forget charity**. Charity this, charity that. Tcha! I try to avoid charity. It is so *boring*, like tomato ketchup. I avoid charity. It doesn't happen for me. I'm rich enough not to have to do that. Thank God I don't have to do that. There are so many poor people who dress deplorably with no sense of style and they look so ugly and stupid and are always out begging. Do you want to encourage them, hm? Of course you do not! It would be different if they possessed any sense of *bravura*, if they styled themselves on the Ballet Russes, or they came out onto the streets with the Audrey Hepburn look. But they do not. The only charity that is acceptable is Save the Tiger, because at all costs we must not lose the real tiger fur, I just adore it, it is so *chic*.

The whale? Tcha! I would never save the whale. It is so *fat*, and who is to blame for that? The whale has let itself go, so it is not even size 18, it is something so much more, like size 35.

And why should I save the whale, when it has let itself go so ugly and morbidly obese? And all the *spouting* it does is so *horrible*. Imagine your reaction if I were to come in her spouting water out of my backside and into the air? I tell you this, you would not be offering me your chic charity money, and that is for sure.

5. **Never travel first-class**. It is so *common*. No-one should travel first-class, with all those strangers with their coughs and their germs. No: a private jet, or nothing at all.

I'm mad for books. I possess them everywhere in my houses. They are so chic. But too many of them in my opinion are about love. A man meets a woman. A man meets a man. They get on well. They become intimate. So what? It is all so *boring*.

So I am redesigning the books. I am being asked by the great House of Penguin to breathe the new life into their tedious back catalogue, to transform it by magic so it is less Seventies and so much more about *now* and *today*.

I tell them no more horrible romance, no ghastly touching if you please. Every morning, I awake early and I go into my studio and I take out my scissors to their catalogues and perform my magic.

Snip! Snip! Snip! This morning, I go to work on Lady Chatterley. Now we have Lady Chatterley, yes, but her lover is gone! Her tacky undressed lover has been disappeared by me and Lady Chatterley, she is back in a proper dinner-dress, with its fabulous lines, and no longer rolling around like a common size 14 in the mud but with good manners for once, I think.

The thing I hate most in life is when people come up to me and talk. I do not want a social life. I've had enough of it. Take it away from me. It's démodé, another era. In the 1990s, it was fashionable to talk to other people, but not now. Now, it is so uninteresting. They never have anything to say. Yesterday, an imbecile London cab driver he said to me, "Turned out nice again, guv." Of course, I refused to reply. Instead, I shut the chic little window between us. "Turned out nice again, guv": It's all so *boring*, hm?"

As told to
CRAIG BROWN

Celeb

LIGGER

POOR LITTLE PIXIE FROU FROU HAS BEEN SUFFERING FROM A BIT OF NEW YEAR BLUES...
JANUARY MATE. BUMMER.
SO LAST WEEK TO CHEER HER UP I TOOK HER TO THE WEST END FOR A SPECIAL WINTER TREAT.
AH.
FOR A BIT OF ESCAPISM, WE WENT TO SEE "THE SNOWMAN" IT WAS GREAT...
THE SNOWMAN? LOVELY.
THEATRE
PIXIE THIS IS MY COKE DEALER..
HI.

Literary Review

Lake woe, be gone!

Liberty
Garrison Keillor
(Faber, £16.99)

To muted applause, a mild mannered middle aged man steps up to the microphone...

This Prairie Home Companion live public radio program and podcast by Garrison Keillor is brought to you by Rick's Animal Feed (You know your cows deserve the best!) and by Joe Loser's bar (Where our beer is your best Buddy).

It's been a quiet week in Lake Wobegon, Minnesota, my fictitious home town on the edge of the prairie. This is the place where it's cold in winter and warm in summer and all the women are strong, all the men are good looking and all the children above average. We're simple folk, and our aspirations are simple too: life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That's what we always say, when we meet in the Chatterbox café, or exchange humdrum gossip by the Statue of the Unknown Norwegian.

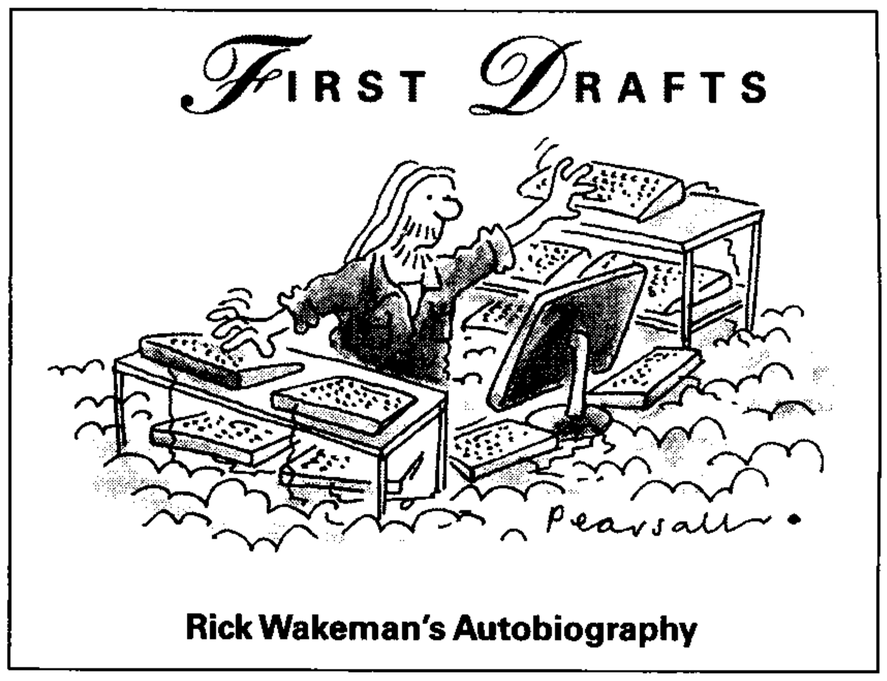
But what if you could only have one of them? Life *or* liberty *or* the pursuit of happiness? Which would you choose? Because they're not necessarily compatible. That's what Clint Bunsen, manager of Bunsen Motors, treasurer of the Lutheran church and chairman of the Fourth of July Committee, finds out in my latest slice of Lake Wobegon life, which for reasons of simplicity (because we're simple folk at heart) I just called "Liberty".

Clint inherited the car dealership from his dad, and for the last six years had has also taken on the burden which his dad once carried, of organising the big parade which the small town puts on to mark the Fourth of July. His dad had an affair with a Mexican contortionist called Bonita, one of the artistes performing in the parade in his day, and now Clint, who recently turned 60, is keeping up the historical tradition by carrying on (and almost carrying off) with a 28-year-old psychic yoga teacher and topless dancer called Angelica Pflame, whom he has met in a chatroom on the internet and who represents the Statue of Liberty in his little big parade.

Trouble is, Clint's wife Irene finds out and will stop at nothing (she's armed and dangerous) to prevent him leaving town and going to live in California with his flame-haired flake. With his life at risk (Irene has threatened to wound him with a bullet in the butt, but she's not such a great shot and he can't be sure she won't accidentally kill him) Clint decides to let the Pflame of Liberty go out, and settles back amiably to pursue what's left of the happiness available to him.

I'd have to admit it's no great meatloaf of a story. Pretty small potatoes in fact. But I manage to pad it out to book length with wordy descriptions of the parades of years gone by, of the preparations for this parade, and of the petty jealousies and neighbourly bitchiness of small town politics as we follow Clint's struggle for dominance and then his final ousting from control of the parade committee. The climax of the novel comes when this year's parade descends into farcical chaos as, live on CNN, Angelica's Statue of Liberty costume accidentally slips off, revealing the naked ambition beneath it, while the state governor is caught kneeling before her in compromising adjacency, oh how I enjoyed writing that scene folks, and what a potent symbol it all was, I reflected in yet another long rambling sentence, of America in this election year, with Lake Wobegon fully living up to its brand identity as a Minnesotan microcosm of our great nation.

I have been writing about Lake Wobegon for more years than I care to remember, recounting with dry wit and mild deprecation the unremarkable doings of its unremarkable inhabitants. My radio show, *A Prairie Home Companion*, has been on the air since 1974, giving weekly sermons on the consolations of mediocrity and the harmless delusions of small town solipsism. Recently I observed on the show that "the best pumpkin pie you ever tasted was not much better than the worst pumpkin pie". I guess you could say that the best Lake Wobegon story you ever read was not much better than the worst. The ingredients are nothing special: a few main characters, a bunch of eccentric walk-ons, a wealth of inconsequential detail, some cracker barrel wisdom, some mild comedy, a dash of bathos and... *Voice drones on in similar vein till even the speaker himself falls asleep...*



Rick Wakeman's Autobiography

LIBRARY NEWS

■ "A LIBRARY service is not a building." So says the document proposing big changes to libraries in Warwickshire, meaning that it's okay to close the library buildings.

Nor is a library books, apparently, since Warwickshire just slashed its book fund from £750,000 to £470,000. It's not even a place to access online information, since the county is currently consulting on how to charge visitors to use the internet.

Instead Warwickshire's "Library Service Transformation" proposes to run "learning, inspirational and activity based services... offered in a mobile way". Two libraries, Studley and Kingsbury, are mentioned as likely early targets to be replaced by these mobile activities. Library bosses say book lending will remain important for the "near future" but that they plan to locate book collections in health centres, schools and supermarkets.

Waitrose in Kenilworth has already started installing return boxes for library books, although the council denies there are plans to close the nearby library, which is one of the busiest in the county. Libraries boss Ayub Khan said that if it worked out, they would extend the idea throughout Warwickshire. Critics fear this move will fatally undermine smaller branch libraries, where people are more likely to borrow more books when popping in to drop some off.

WHAT YOU DIDN'T MISS, Pt 94

Reborn: Early diaries 1947-1964
Susan Sontag
(Hamish Hamilton, £16.99)

11/25/47 (*aged 14*)

I believe:
that there is no personal god or life after death;
that the most desirable thing in the world is freedom to be true to oneself;
that mumps are probably better than measles.

7/29/48 (*15*)

...and what it is to be rapt in the youthfulness of one's imaginings, waking all astart in cerebral flame to glimpse the ravening, anguished urgency of life.

One or two of the books I have read recently: Proust, Ariosto, Dante, Tibullus, Rimbaud, Verlaine, (*continues for several hundred pages*)

1950 (*at college*)

Devastated once more by my lack of interpretative delicacy. To think that the importance of Browning's dramatic monologues should have escaped me for so long. Another author who will be privileged to have me read him this summer.

Mann's *Buddenbrooks*: incomparable. In contrast with banality of the man himself. Today I saw him eat a sandwich. Quite incompatible with any true conception of genius. Wittgenstein the same with his crossword puzzles. Wept.

As a child I was an unreconstituted positivist.

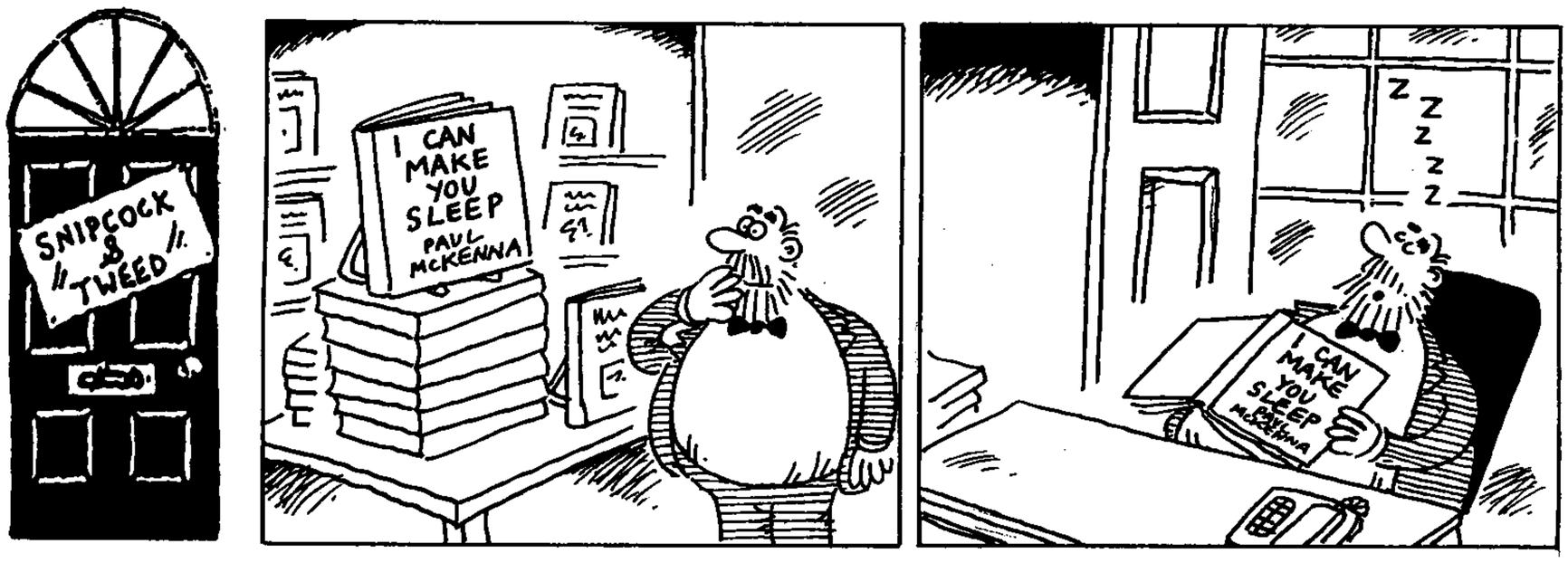
1956

Rilke's great question: how is it possible to exist? Yet we do. But where is that chronic desideratum, the *out-thereness*, the *not-being deadness*, the mad escape beyond art to the blasted shores of life which is itself *nearly death*? And *italics*.

Above all, poetry must be poetic.

The coming of the orgasm has changed my life. Sexuality is my paradigm. Before my sexuality was granular, condensed, plastic. Now it is amoebic, diffuse, lachrymose.

[*Memo to whoever edits this in 50 years time. Just remember I was a fucking genius OK? SS.*]



Books & Bookmen

■ THE TS Eliot Prize for poetry went to Jen Hadfield last week, even though the favourite, the popular Mick Imlah, had died from motor neurone disease earlier that very day.

Fortunately, culture secretary Andy Burnham was on hand at Skinner's Hall in the City of London to distract the mourning guests with his thoughts on poetry and how it has changed his life.

"I had a Tony Harrison VHS thrust into my hand by a teacher, which turned my life around, and it showed me that poetry could have a northern voice," he said in, er, a northern voice.

Cue much grimacing from Lord Evans, who was walking former laureate Ted Hughes's widow Carole to the event. "Yes. Perhaps he's never actually heard of Ted Hughes," spat Evans. Pity also that many had heard the entire obviously cut-and-paste speech before from Burnham, at the National Poetry Competition last year.

■ ANTHONY QUINN is the latest hack to try to get rich quick on the back of the current popularity for historical novels, inspired by C. J. Sansom's *Winter in Madrid*.

Quinn and publishers Jonathan Cape have followed the Sansom formula from plot to dustjacket: listless protagonist pushing 40 looking to make himself useful in the war effort against the backdrop of a city in ruins; pale front cover image depicting a couple arm-in-arm on a cold winter's day.

Sadly, reviews have so far been lukewarm, with one exception. The *Independent* found it "an evocative and elegiac period piece. Writing with the eye and language of a serious novelist, Quinn has reclaimed an intriguing chapter of Liverpool's history". Its Sunday title also gave him interview space. And Quinn's day job? Film critic of the *Independent*.

■ *THE World According to Garry Bushell*, the new book from the telly critic otherwise known as Gal Gonad, was due out in November. So why was it launched only last week?

It seems Gal's editor at John Blake Publishing, Clive Hebard, thought his duties included taking out huge chunks of opinion and most of the jokes, some of which he replaced with his own. Bushell went off like an explosion in a pubic-hair factory when he saw the page-proofs, and feverish rewrites ensued as his rants were restored.

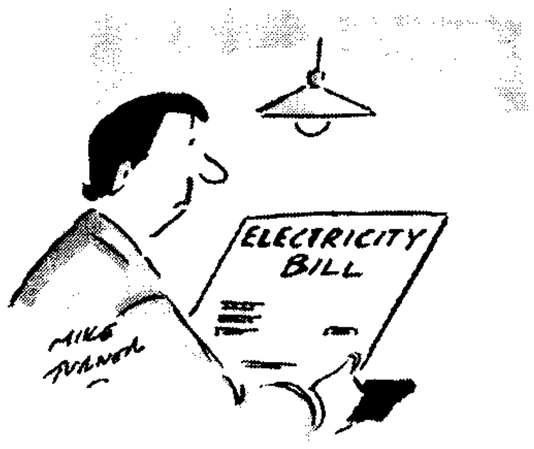
Flakey Blakey and his glamorous deputy Rosie Ries had to treat the bearded beast to two slap-up champagne dinners (at Langans and the Chelsea Arts Club) to placate him. Hebard, wisely, has since left Blake's employ for a less stressful job at Mills & Boon.

Bushell has a strange almost masochistic relationship with his publisher. In the 1980s he was due to fight Flakey Blakey, who was then a pop columnist – only to end up in the boxing ring with Lloyd Honeyghan instead, who proceeded to knock seven shades out of him. When Blake published his novel *The Face* in 2001 it got Bushell the sack from the *Sun*. We can only wait and see what new awful fate awaits "Britain's best-loved TV critic".

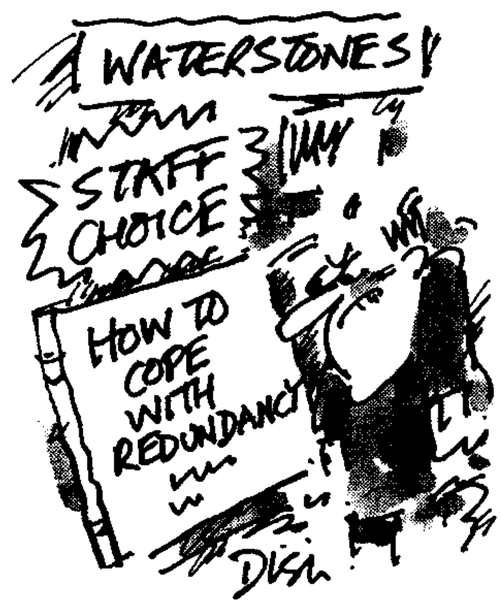
'Bookworm'

Rabbit P. has presented us with manifold problems. He is the last of 4 children being brought up by 'mum' after the sudden death of his father. Mrs Rabbit is well-bonded with Flopsy, Mopsy and Cottontail, but due to postnatal depression has failed to recognise Peter as a rabbit – insisting on him wearing a little jacket and slippers. Unsurprisingly **Rabbit P.** exhibits an attachment disorder and is involved in thrill-seeking and risky behaviour. He also binge eats in order to nurture and self comfort. It is hoped that with intensive family therapy **Rabbit P.** will be able to form closer bonds and work towards greater self-control. Simon Bradshaw

UPDATED CLASSICS



The Heavy Charge Of The Light Brigade



LUVVIES

"The quote that will be instilled in me for ever is, 'Pain is temporary; film is for ever'."

LEONARDO DICAPRIO
Sunday Times Magazine

Submitted by Adam Jackson.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

Pseuds Corner

Most years there prove to be some books that have been chosen as presents by more than one member of the family. This year there were two; I gave a copy of Niall Ferguson's *Money* to Modwenna, our daughter-in-law, herself a national authority on micro-finance. I received the same book from Annunziata, our daughter.

WILLIAM REES-MOGG
The Times

Surveying the frozen wreckage of his army after their retreat from Moscow, Napoleon remarked that 'January is Russia's greatest general.' At Manchester City they have waited for January with the same sense of expectation as the Russians greeted the first snows of 1812 or 1941.

TIM RICH
Guardian

Leicester versus Bath

When these two clubs meet I am reminded of the lines from John Donne, 'She is all states, and all princes I. Nothing else is.'

SIMON BARNES
The Times

Jet-lag remedy: '*Griffonia simplicifolia* seed extract – a.k.a. 5-HTP – and *Paullinia cupana* for energy. And I never do work in bed.'

Best-loved luggage: 'It's all pink with hard-shell cases. I have six or seven of them: Benetton, Hayes…If I can find pink luggage, I buy it.'

Grooming supplies: 'I never check a bag, so I carry a small set in my briefcase: Kiehl's shaving cream, Biotherm moisturizer, a good natural toothpaste – all kept in one of those Ziploc plastic bags. I've been thinking of designing one.'

Industrial designer KARIM RASHID
Time Magazine's 'Style and Design' issue

To follow the development of the Ford Fiesta through its seven different incarnations is a bit like tracing the evolution of man.

ANDREW ANTHONY
Guardian Weekend

Every Christmas at my son's school the children cover a shoebox with wrapping paper, fill it with presents and mark it for either a girl or boy of the age they think would most appreciate its contents. All these boxes are delivered to the West London Action for Children headquarters which distributes them to the neediest of the children they support, those least likely to receive any presents of Christmas Day. While we were filling our box with packets of Gogo's Crazy Bones, Roald Dahl's book *Danny the Champion of the World*, a diary and some sweets, I couldn't help slipping in a packet of Bassetts Soft & Chewy Active Health Plus Omega-3, which has helped my own eight year-old with concentration. He also loves hair products, so we selected Fudge Hair Shaper for our unknown friend, and then, on further entreaties, some L'Oreal StudioLine Indestructible Gel.

'Bella [Freud] on Beauty'
***Sunday Telegraph Stella* Magazine**

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times…Little did Charles Dickens know when he penned the opening lines of his classic Tale of Two Cities 149 years ago that it was a sentiment that could be applied to the US albums market for last week.

Music Week

CONTRIBUTORS: Tom Miller, Tim Witherow, Guy Cudmore, Thomas Frisch, Laura Gregory, Toby Smith, Patricia Hammond.

£10 paid for all entries

IN THE BACK

RECESSION WATCH

The green suits of recovery

WITH taxpayers now propping up everything from the giants of banking to small businesses and vulnerable homebuyers, who is safeguarding all this public largesse?

Appointments to the board of UK Financial Investments (UKFI), the new Treasury company set up to run the taxpayer's stakes in high street banks RBS, Lloyds TSB/HBOS, Northern Rock and Bradford & Bingley, certainly grow stranger by the day.

Looking after the public interest as a new non-executive director will be one **Glen Moreno**, the £450,000-a-year chairman of *Financial Times* owner, Pearson plc. Leaving aside whether the proprietor of Britain's leading financial paper should take a job with a government body his organ should be holding to account, there's his other interest in the country's finances: er, ripping them off.

The Pearson chairman also happens to be a trustee of both Prince Alois of Liechtenstein and of the prince's Liechtenstein Global Trust, a private banking empire which exists to promote, ahem, tax-dodging using the alpine principality's notorious secrecy.

So serious is the threat this poses to the UK exchequer that last year HM Revenue and Customs took the unprecedented step of paying £100,000 to an insider for stolen details of British residents' LGT accounts. At the time HMRC railed: "Banking secrecy laws designed to shield money laundering and tax evasion from the authorities are from a bygone era… they have no place in the modern world." Unlike, it seems, the suits who make it possible.

Meanwhile, the placing of a Liechtenstein prince's flunkey in the thoroughly modern world of government-controlled banking won't encourage those who thought public ownership of banks might see offshore tax-dodging reined in.

Adding to his credentials as a public custodian, Moreno is also the "senior independent director" of Man Group plc, where he has been since 1994 (a tenure exceeding that allowed for "independence" under the government's corporate governance code). Moreno claims some credit for converting the firm from a boring commodities trader into a sexy hedge fund manager. Sadly his wise counsel did not prevent the firm losing $360m on fraudster Bernie Madoff last month.

Moreno is joined on the UKFI board by former UBS, Citigroup and Merrill Lynch investment bankers, all exuberant participants in what the minister responsible for UKFI, **Lord Myners**, this month called the "age of irresponsibility" – exactly what forced the banks into the government's hands in the first place!

Death and tax dodging

WITH tax receipts severely threatened by the economic downturn, it will be all hands to the pump at Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs, where job cuts have hit hard. How odd then that chancellor Alistair Darling, who only three months ago dismissed his chums in the City as "a bunch of bankers" when they proved so slippery negotiating their taxpayer-funded bail out, should now be happy to put them in charge of… tax collection!

New non-executive directors for the beleaguered HMRC include one **Phil Hodkinson**, finance director of HBOS for three years until April 2008, as the bank over-borrowed and found itself hopelessly exposed to the credit crunch. The bail-out swiftly followed. Hodkinson was also responsible for the bank's tax affairs as it fought with HMRC over profits channelled into offshore tax havens and VAT avoidance.

Among his other current jobs, as *Eye* 1224 revealed, is a directorship of Resolution, a vulture fund registered in Guernsey to avoid tax. All of which sits uncomfortably not just with his new tax job but also his trusteeship of Christian Aid, recent publisher of a hard-hitting report. Its title? *Death and taxes: the true toll of tax dodging.*

Alongside Hodkinson on the HMRC board is fellow banker **John Spence**, formerly in charge of "policy and risk" at Lloyds TSB, a bank whose tax avoidance led to HMRC branding it a "high risk corporate" and whose screw-ups on policy and risk while Spence was there saw it admit criminal sanctions-busting and pay a $350m fine in the US two weeks ago. Spence is now amply employed on "the HMRC Audit Committee, the Departmental Transformation Programme Steering Group, and the Corporate Responsibility and Diversity Committee".

Another new HMRC director is **Dame Sue Street**, a "strategic adviser" at tax avoidance consultants Deloitte and formerly permanent secretary at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport where Tessa Jowell credited her with being instrumental in winning the 2012 Olympics for London – on a bid that was famously under-priced and for which hard-pressed taxpayers will be picking up the tab for many years to come.

Manx for nothing

DEPOSITORS in the Isle of Man branch of bust Icelandic bank Kaupthing Singer Friedlander may not elicit huge public sympathy, but there are some non-tax dodgers among them who have been well and truly hung out to dry by a British government that has long encouraged banking in the crown dependencies.

Just before Kaupthing went under in October, the Isle of Man branch forwarded £530m of its customer deposits to the bank's London branch. This did not give the depositors any protection under the UK financial services compensation scheme because their cash had been deposited on the Isle of Man; and the money is now available to pay off the bank's UK, rather than Manx, depositors and creditors instead.

The £530m transaction followed discussions, which remain shrouded in mystery, between the British and Manx regulators. Soon afterwards Kaupthing collapsed and the Treasury froze its assets here in the UK, insisting that none of the deposits by then over here should be returned to the Isle of Man.

When it comes to negotiating compensation from the Icelandic government, the depositors are now reliant on the British government, a task that the Whitehall department responsible, the Ministry of Justice, has palmed off to a Treasury notoriously dismissive of the depositors' plight.

Last month MoJ minister **Lord Bach** nonetheless insisted everything was fine. Asked at a parliamentary committee hearing whether he was sure "those [Isle of Man] depositors' interests are now safeguarded, insofar as any depositors' interests are safeguarded in the UK?" he replied categorically: "Yes, I am." But a swift bollocking from the Treasury must have followed, for by the time the transcript of the hearing appeared a footnote had been added: "*Note by witness*: I am satisfied by the steps taken by the UK Government in the interests of the people whose deposits the UK regulatory authorities are responsible for." In other words, *not* those in the Isle of Man. For IoM depositors who might have got their hopes up, this translates as: you're still shafted.

CABINET SECURITY

A Shortt story

THE government's decision to privatise security at the Cabinet Office and in other parts of Whitehall has created problems for those tasked with vetting some of the many private companies now offering their services, either by providing security guards themselves or by training them.

One such problematic figure is Baron James "Jimbo" Shortt, director-general of the International Bodyguard Association (see *Eye* 1223).

Brian Ware, who heads the departmental security unit at the Cabinet Office and is also the owner of a private security company himself, Protector Network, has offered Shortt work training security guards at the Cabinet Office and has been happy to go on the record endorsing his services – an unusual procedure for a civil servant working close to the heart of government.

Writing under the official Cabinet Office letter head, and dated 3 May 2007, Ware thanked Shortt for his "superb" close protection operations course, adding: "I would have no hesitation in using the IBA as a training provider in the future."

Shortt, who has produced this "official" endorsement more than once to counter criticism of his own business, has enjoyed other forms of patronage thanks to Ware. In February 2008, Ware announced that Shortt had been "appointed by the Cabinet Office as a Security Assessor to provide an independent overview… of the guarding function, its capabilities and performance at the Cabinet Office, 70 Whitehall, following the privatisation of the in-house guard service and their outsourcing".

The outsourcing of government security has already been condemned by several MPs as a farce – and potentially risky too, perhaps, when the head of Cabinet Office security, for example, is able to continue running his own private security company at the same time.

If vetting is highly sensitive in this area, which deals with security at the highest level of government, it's odd that nobody at the Cabinet Office seems to have noticed that its audit was placed in the hands of Jim Shortt, or The Baron of Castleshort, who, while winning 15 "Honours", two Papal knighthoods and "Military Parachute & Special Forces Awards" from 12 countries, also found the time to become "the first outsider to train KGB (Crimea 1991)" – an interesting career move for one entrusted with such a delicate position.

Shortt must also be the first officially sanctioned auditor ever to have posed for a photograph in the indispensable *The Vital Guide to Combat Guns and Infantry Weapons* wearing a Russian uniform and brandishing an AK-74.

It's odd too that nobody looked more closely at some of the more lavish entries on his four-page CV. He claims, for example, to have served in the 10th Battalion, The Parachute Regiment (v). He also says he served with "B" and later "HQ" Squadron 21st Special Air Service Regiment (v) using the service number 24550634. But all these claims have been queried by serving soldiers.

Odder still is that the Cabinet Office is happy with Jimbo's account of his military service, especially when the Home Office says that "the current terrorism threat level is Severe".

Brian Ware is still happy to endorse Shortt based on the quality of the training he offers. But Ware's own company, Protector Network, is affiliated to Shortt's IBA. Indeed, Shortt's company gets a puff for its "reputation for excellence" on Ware's company website.

Meanwhile, the government's Security Industry Authority is in crisis following the revelation that it issued licences to 1,350 illegal immigrants, which led to the resignation of its chief executive, Mike Wilson.

The issues of vetting and independence raised in this case suggest that what Chris Huhne MP described as a "culture of carelessness about security" within Whitehall extends further than many MPs thought.

'Squarebasher'

HULL FLOODS

Plain folly

THE Environment Agency appears to be back-tracking on its daft idea of abandoning flood defences in Humberside and using low-lying farmland close to the River Hull as "flood storage" areas instead (*Eye 1225*).

The agency has now extended its consultation and has agreed to urgent talks with East Riding council after the latter threatened to fight the plan in the high court.

The agency's current strategy for Hull is deeply flawed. The devastating 2007 flood in the city – which increased the pressure for better flood management in the region – was not a river flood. It happened because Hull's inadequate drainage was overwhelmed by torrential rain falling in the city itself. Causing the river to flood further upstream would have made no difference. Moreover, Hull's historic flooding problems have generally been caused by the sea surging in, not by water flowing down from the Yorkshire Wolds.

Hull's problems have been greatly exacerbated in recent decades by planning officials allowing developers to build on the city's own flood plain. Incredibly, the Kingswood estate (on low-lying land that has flooded for centuries) is still being developed.

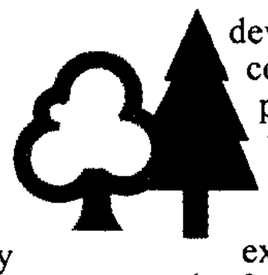
In a recent Commons adjournment debate, Graham Stuart, MP for Beverley and Holderness, pointed out that the East Riding includes some of the most productive farmland in the world. Yet despite environment minister Hilary Benn's recent pronouncement that "food security" was the main priority of his department, the Environment Agency planned to flood 12,000 acres of it.

As well as the agricultural land, the area also contains hundreds of people's homes. "For the estimated cost of £16m over a long period [to maintain the existing defences], the Environment Agency said that is was no longer worth the candle and not worth defending those people and their homes," said Mr Stuart. The agency now plans to wait until March to make its decision.

SCOTLAND'S FORESTS

Wood you believe it!

A PLAN by the Scottish National Party-led government in Scotland to privatise more than 100,000 hectares of forest is provoking political fury north of the border.



The SNP is considering leasing a quarter of the land currently looked after by the Scottish Forestry Commission, including large swathes of Aberdeenshire and Argyll, to private logging firms for the next 75 years. It has put the idea out for consultation, claiming that such a move would more than double woodland planting and raise £200m to "fight climate change".

Angry Labour members of the Scottish parliament (MSPs) and Scottish MPs at Westminster disagree. They say the plans threaten the 13,200 jobs in the Scottish timber industry, as well as thousands of jobs related to tourism on national forest land. They also claim the economics of the scheme appear fatally flawed.

Parliamentary questions from Scottish Labour's environment spokesperson Elaine Murray revealed that any firm leasing the land would also be eligible for huge grants to plant new trees under a Scottish government rural development programme. This meant they could "chop down timber that has been planted at public expense, walk away with the profit and then get paid to re-plant more trees". If the Scottish government was going to pay for the planting of the extra woodland through grants anyway, why farm the land out to the private sector?

Meanwhile south of the border there have been numerous reports that the Forestry Commission in England is being looked at, alongside Ordnance Survey and the Met Office, as a potential privatisation target. That was certainly borne out by a line in last year's pre-budget report, when chancellor Alistair Darling announced that as part of work to "achieve efficiencies on other government assets... a study of the Forestry Commission's portfolio in England is being launched to examine options for delivery of public value from the estate in the long term".

Forestry workers and unions are gearing up to fight any such move. But will Labour MPs in England be as vociferous in support of them as their colleagues in Scotland?

HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS

A sick decision

HOUSING associations aren't necessarily the caring, philanthropic organisations of popular imagination.

Take the case of Linda Coote, 55, a live-in sheltered housing manager of 14 years' standing, who was sacked for visiting a seriously ill resident out of hours. Ms Coote worked for the Home Housing Association (HHA), which manages 52,000 properties across the UK, at a sheltered housing complex in Lingdale, Middlesbrough.

An employment tribunal heard how Ms Coote learned that a resident with advanced motor neurone disease was having difficulty swallowing. His carer feared he might choke to death. Ms Coote gained entry to the resident's property and found the man was having difficulty breathing because agency workers whose responsibility it was to swab his mouth had not done the job properly. After dealing with the emergency, she reprimanded the agency staff. They complained to her manager, Judith Tagg, who reported the matter to HHA bosses. They sacked Ms Coote for allegedly breaching the "protection of vulnerable adults" code.

At the tribunal hearing at Thornaby-on-Tees, Ms Coote told Judge Tudor Garnon that she had attended the emergency situation as a "human being" and had been told by Tagg: "If one of the residents collapsed at ten to five the claimant should help, but if they collapsed at ten past five the claimant should step over them."

Acknowledging that Ms Coote's prompt action may have saved the life of the sick man, Judge Garnon told the hearing: "Surely an employee who has performed in an emergency situation to effectively save the life of a resident should be congratulated, not penalised."

The tribunal criticised HHA not only for its "draconian" actions against Ms Coote, but also for having ignored a petition signed by the 41 residents of the sheltered scheme who had called for her to be reinstated.

Following the judgment HHA's executive director of housing operations, Jim Rafferty, could only bring himself to say: "In the light of this judgment we will be offering discussions with Ms Coote about her possible return to work," before adding: "We are disappointed at the verdict of the tribunal; we thought we had made a strong case for taking the action we did."

EXTRADITION

US and them

AT WHAT may be the last public meeting to stop Gary McKinnon being deported to the US on "cyber-terrorism charges", David Burrowes, his MP, was solid in his opposition to the unequal extradition arrangements between Britain and America.

No surprise that the Enfield MP should see the injustice of McKinnon's predicament and line up with civil-liberties groups at his solicitors' offices.

As reported in *Eye* 1221, McKinnon may be a UFO-nut and 9/11 conspiracy loon, but he hacked into US defence computers in 2001 via the less-than-cutting-edge technology of a dial-up modem. The military had not put in firewalls or passwords to stop him – or indeed a serious spy or terrorist – from accessing its networks.

McKinnon betrayed no confidences – indeed, he claims some US officers have thanked him for revealing the vulnerability in their systems. He suffers from Asperger syndrome, and would have a hard time of it in jail. Yet rather than try him in Britain for crimes committed here, the authorities are planning to deport him to the US where, if convicted, he could spend the rest of his life in a "Supermax" jail.

The extradition treaty removed the need for the US to provide evidence to a British court that it had a *prima facie* case against a suspect. No such restriction is placed on American judges, who tell the Brits that they must prove "probable cause" before they can extradite an American defendant.

If Tory MPs want to get angrier still, the *Eye* has more cases that may raise their hackles. Labour rushed in the extradition arrangement after the 9/11 atrocities; since then Abu Hamza and other terrorist suspects have been deported, but inevitably the treaty has been used against defendants whose connection to terrorism is even more tenuous than McKinnon's.

Farshid Gillardian, for instance, makes an unlikely Islamist bomber. He is, in fact, a Jew, who was selling electronic components online in the UK. There was nothing illegal about his business, but the Americans alleged that parts from his site ended up in roadside bombs in Iraq and Afghanistan. He faces deportation to Miami and a long, worrying and expensive trial far from home.

Similarly, Brian Howes and his wife Kerry-Ann were arrested, deported and held on remand in a US prison last year for selling red phosphorus and iodine through their web-based chemical company. The Americans claimed drug producers had used them in the underground production of crystal meth in the States.

Howes said: "We were selling these chemicals all over the UK, Europe and the world, not just to the US. We can't possibly know what people are doing with them 3,000 miles away." The couple are back in Scotland on bail but could still be deported and face a jail sentence if convicted.

In March last year, a businessman called Ian Norris had to appeal all the way to the House of Lords to stop extradition on charges of price-fixing in the US in the 1990s. The law lords said that as price-fixing was not a crime in the UK at the time, the Americans could not extradite.

His was a rare victory in a Britain that normally extradites without checking that the case against a suspect is justified. Defence lawyers say that most countries try their nationals at home for crimes committed at home. In November, even Romania, not known as a beacon of liberty to the world, insisted that Victor Faur, a computer programmer who hacked into US Navy, Department of Energy and Nasa systems, be tried in Bucharest, where he was duly convicted and punished.

The extradition scandals follow the use of anti-terrorist legislation here to arrest greens protesting at Heathrow and to collect evidence for councils looking for fly-tippers. One day ministers will say they need emergency powers against a real terrorist threat, and parliament and the public will simply not believe them.

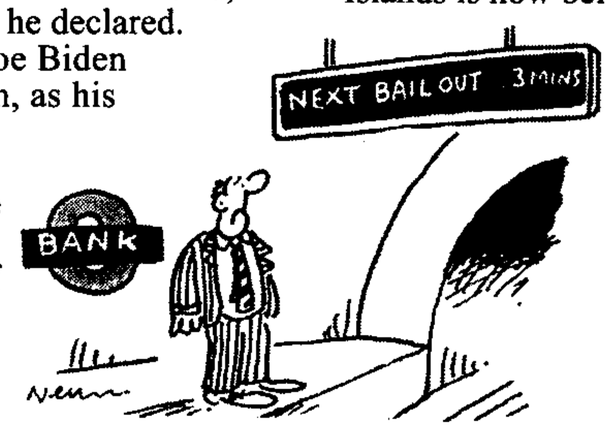
'Ratbiter'

In the City

AMONG the priority items for President Obama as part of his plans to revive the US economy is expected to be a drive against the tax revenues lost through the use and abuse of tax havens.

In the previous two years the then junior senator from Illinois helped launch the Stop Tax Haven Abuse and the Incorporation Transparency and Law Enforcement Assistance acts – both aimed at tax havens. While campaigning he attacked the Cayman Islands over Ugland House in George Town, home to more than 12,000 companies. "That's either the biggest building in the world or the biggest tax scam in the world, and we know which one it is," he declared.

Whether Vice-President Joe Biden shares such views is uncertain, as his home state of Delaware is America's very own major onshore tax haven, with more than 600,000 companies registered. Many hundreds of thousands more opaque limited-liability corporations – often little more than shells – are to be found in Oregon, Wyoming and Nevada, as well as California, Florida and New York. These are used for tax evasion and money laundering by Americans and foreigners. Foreign governments will be looking to Obama to crack down at home as well as offshore – a political issue which may slow down legislation if not rhetoric.



The American authorities signalled their intent in November by indicting the head of global wealth management for the largest Swiss bank, UBS. One of its executives has already pleaded guilty and is co-operating with the Internal Revenue Service, and UBS has now agreed to close 19,000 accounts that had not been disclosed by its US clients to the IRS.

But it is not just in the US. All over the world the climate against tax havens is changing, driven by the growing need to boost tax revenues at a time when recession is cutting the tax take. With an estimated $6 trillion in assets held offshore and paying little or no tax, this is hardly surprising.

Leading the charge has been Germany, with its assault – aided by two whistleblowers within local Vaduz banks – on Liechtenstein, which has been forced to say it will mend its ways. Finance ministers from the G20 leading economies announced in November that tax secrecy should be "vigorously addressed". Soon afterwards a UN meeting on development produced an attack on the havens' role in capital flight. France's President Sarkozy has questioned whether – as part of the global banking bail-out – banks should even be allowed to operate offshore.

All this is bad news for Britain's home-grown septic isles of Jersey, Guernsey and the Isle of Man, the last two of which are already well in the frame as a result of hosting branches of Northern Rock, the Icelandic banking twins Kaupthing and Landsbanki and Anglo Irish Bank – all of which have had to be rescued by the taxpayer. Depositors in the Icelandic banks in Guernsey and the Isle of Man discovered they had little or no protection (see *Manx for Nothing*, p28).

Further away, meanwhile, are other British-ruled havens: Gibraltar (home to much of the online gaming and betting business), Bermuda and the Caribbean islands, which so often attract Uncle Sam's ire. The Caymans were home to many of Enron's special-purpose vehicles. No wonder the islands were happy to sponsor Channel 4's recent Niall Ferguson series *The Ascent of Money*! The number of companies, most of them single-purpose (no prizes for guessing what that is), registered in the British Virgin Islands is now believed to have reached or be approaching one million!

Storms have been gathering over the British Caribbean havens since a pair of critical Commons select committee reports last year. At the annual Offshore Alert conference on offshore financial centres/tax havens last April, much of the talk was of pressure coming from the US and the EU to close down their operations. One speaker, with close links to the Foreign Office, forecast that within maybe five years the game would be over and that only Panama would be able to resist.

That forecast was given further support in November, when Chancellor Darling announced a "root and branch" review of the tax and revenue relationship between Britain and its three crown dependencies and 14 overseas territories. Darling, mimicking Captain Renault in *Casablanca*, was seemingly "shocked, shocked" to discover that our nearest and dearest were luring customers with low taxes without contributing to the UK exchequer.

So the Jersey authorities cannot look with enthusiasm on an extradition battle that is about to begin over accountant Philip de Figueiredo, arrested on 30 December on a warrant from Australia for his alleged role in one of its biggest ever tax investigations. De Figueiredo, a British national who moved from Jersey to Geneva, is a director in the trust and company management outfit Strachans SA, which has or had links to two similarly named companies in Jersey, one of which was dissolved in 2007 after operating there since 1979. The Swiss company is the target of the Australian probe; De Figueiredo faces possible fraud and tax fraud charges.

In 2005 the Australian Tax Office (ATO) and the Australian Crime Commission (ACC) named another former Jersey-based Strachans SA director, accountant Philip Egglishaw, as the mastermind behind a series of tax schemes sold to hundreds of Australians since the 90s. Egglishaw, who moved to Geneva and may now live in Monaco, has so far not been charged. Extraditions for tax offences are notoriously difficult unless fraud can be proved, and it is thought the Australians had been waiting for the opportunity to arrest any of the Strachans principals in less difficult jurisdictions. De Figueiredo had returned to Jersey for the holidays.

The Strachans schemes involved offshore trusts, Swiss bank accounts and British Virgin Islands companies. Australia has one of the most aggressive general anti-avoidance regimes, and its prosecutors have claimed that Strachans offered to "deposit funds anonymously" and retain "confidentiality" during bankruptcy.

A Strachans brochure, one of three left behind by Egglishaw in a Sydney hotel room in November 2003, said that its services "proved particularly attractive to entertainers (including actors and pop stars), film directors and producers, sportsmen, international executives… and other clients who have already established offshore structures". The document went on to say: "Although it is far from adequate to rely solely upon secrecy as a basis of tax planning, it does form a natural concomitant to skilful tax planning arrangements. The required level of secrecy will be dependent upon the sensitivity of the client and the proposed type and location of the activities." Another brochure hailed the advantages of locating assets in Jersey and the BVI.

Since 2005, it has emerged in assorted Australian legal proceedings that the list of Strachans clients and associates includes *Crocodile Dundee* star Paul Hogan (who is accused of hiding at least $5m in film royalties in offshore havens) as well as Kylie Minogue's former lawyer Michael Brereton (the singer is not under investigation), and cricketers Shane Warne and Allan Border, who have been questioned about money earned here. None of these has been charged and all deny any wrongdoing or maintain they engaged in legitimate tax planning and reported any offshore accounts. The ACC recently lost a case against Brereton, who also had some £500,000 returned to him by the taxman.

In 2002 the ATO began an investigation of Brereton, who did business with Strachans, and that led to Egglishaw. On Valentine's Day 2004 ACC officers presented a search warrant, rather than a card, to Egglishaw at his Melbourne hotel. He was making his usual round of meetings with lawyers, accountants and their clients. They seized his notebook laptop, which contained details of many clients and their advisers. This resulted in 85 raids being carried out in 2005 on offices and homes as part of what is called Operation Wickenby by the ACC, targeting tax fraud by Australians, and Project Wickenby by the ATO, targeting tax haven abuse offshore. Budgeted to cost more than £130m, the five-year investigation has so far resulted in three convictions, including rock star manager and Strachans client Glenn Wheatley, with another two sentences due next month.

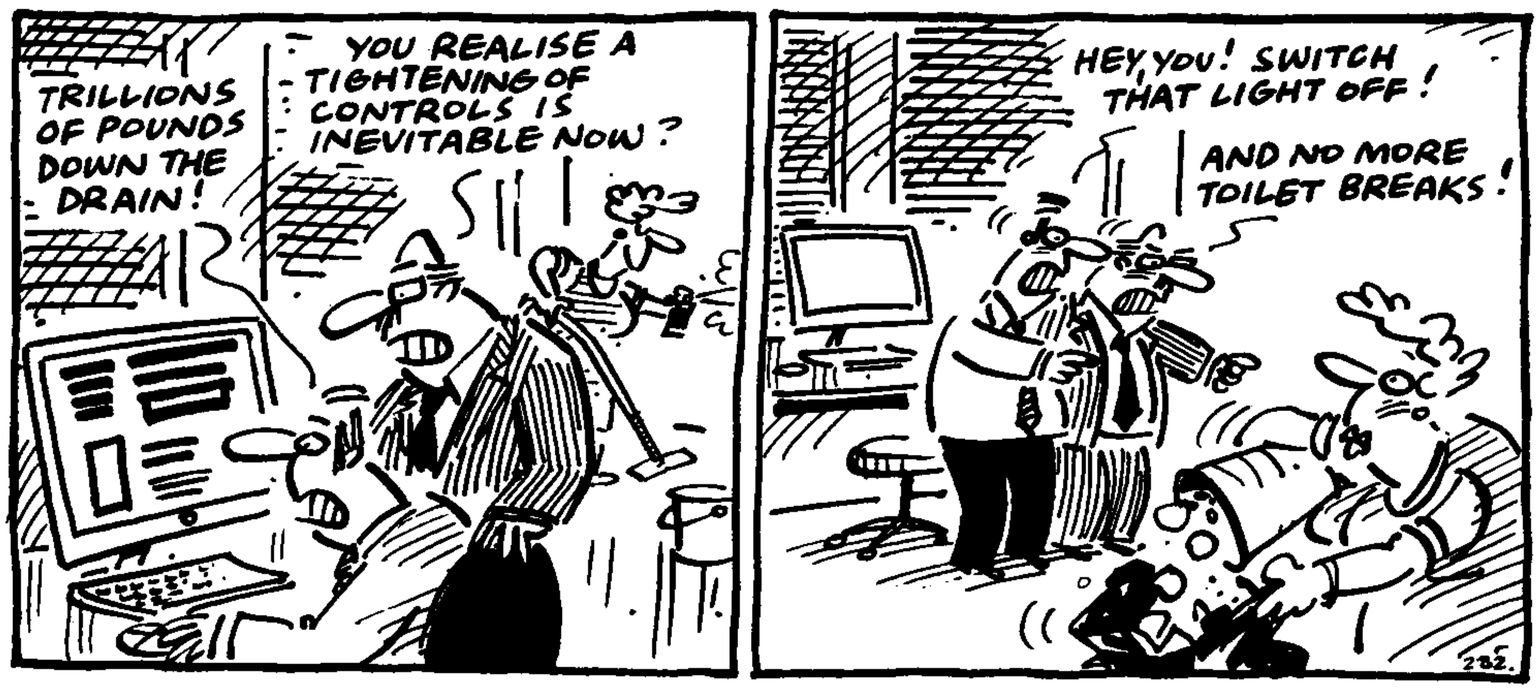
Wickenby has been extended to other tax promoters and tax havens, including Vanuatu and clients there of accountants PKF. More than 150 tax audits have been commenced and tax assessments for £30m issued and £8m recovered. Wickenby is expected to recover its £130m cost.

Strachans offices in Jersey were searched in 2004, and its offices in Geneva in 2005 by the Swiss, at the request of the Australian authorities. So, too, was the Corner Bank in Lugano, allegedly home to accounts with credit cards, which gave Strachans clients access to their cash via ATMs anywhere in the world. Egglishaw has been contesting the ACC's actions in Switzerland as well as Australia, denying any wrongdoing and demanding the return of documents and stopping their use in criminal cases. Lawyers and tax experts argue that not all the Strachans schemes were illegal and many were legitimate. That debate is expected to be settled in the Australian courts.

Meanwhile, back in Jersey, the extradition battle over Egglishaw's partner, De Figueiredo, is due to start next month. Jersey can point to the fact that it has assisted the Australians. But the spotlight on the activities of two former residents, even if the Geneva company Strachans SA is at the centre of the investigation, will be unwelcome at a time when politicians at home and abroad have Jersey in their sights.

THE DIRECTORS

DREDGE & RIGG


TRILLIONS OF POUNDS DOWN THE DRAIN!
YOU REALISE A TIGHTENING OF CONTROLS IS INEVITABLE NOW?
HEY, YOU! SWITCH THAT LIGHT OFF!
AND NO MORE TOILET BREAKS!

PWC TAKES audit quality and ethical standards… extremely seriously… We are confident that we continue to deliver the very highest quality audit work to underpin the operation of the capital market."

So wrote an angry Richard Sexton, PwC's UK head of assurance, to the *Financial Times* on 11 December following its report of criticisms made by the Financial Reporting Council of the beancounters' continued cross-selling of consultancy services to its audit clients.

On 7 January, one of PwC's largest audit clients in India, B Ramalinga Raju, founder and "chairman of Satyam Computer Services, confessed that for several years he had falsified the IT group's profits, revenues and cash – including $1bn cash in its bank accounts that never existed! As verifying bank balances is a basic audit procedure, just what PwC was checking is now under intensive investigation. Not surprisingly, the firm has been fired. It is supposed to be answerable to PwC in London and to follow its accounting policies, but so far PwC has stayed silent on the $1bn Satyam black hole.

The latest Satyam audit certificate by PwC last August stated that its audit complied with US standards that "require that we plan and perform the audits to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material mis-statement and whether effective internal control over financial reporting was maintained in all material respects. Our audits of the financial statements included examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements… Our audit of internal control over financial reporting included obtaining an understanding of internal control over financial reporting, assessing the risk that a material weakness exists… We believe that our audits provide a reasonable basis for our opinions."

This clean bill of health was worth no less than $1.9m to PwC, of which $1.17m was for the audit and another $421,000 for "assurance and related services related to performance of the audit"! The previous year those figures were $1.8m, $874,000 and $342,000. Back in 2003, by when it seems Raju was already riding the tiger of fraud he says he found it impossible to get off, PwC's total fee was a mere $450,000. Since then the firm has collected a total of $6.16m in fees for certifying a successive series of false accounts. All of which raises questions about just how much audits of similar large, family-dominated Indian companies can be relied upon.

Similarly, the failure of the now nationalised Anglo Irish Bank's auditors, Ernst & Young, to detect or report that sacked chairman Sean Fitzpatrick had been loaned €87m last year, €122m in 2007 and €48m in 2006 – the loans were round-tripped to another bank come audit time – raises serious questions nearer home. No wonder Gordon Brown wants British banks to come clean on their real losses and balance-sheet secrets before handing over further taxpayer cheques.

WHILE negotiating to buy the loss-making *Evening Standard* (see page 5), former KGB man in London Alexander Lebedev has – like Chelsea's Roman Abramovich – been having his own financial problems.

It was reported last month that he was looking to the state-owned VEB bank for assistance to help over a margin call on his shares in Aeroflot. His National Reserve Bank had a $400m loan from Deutsche Bank in which its 25 percent of the national carrier was used as security, but as it happens he paid off that loan by borrowing from another Russian bank, most likely VTB. Deutsche Bank was said to have been looking for $130m to stave off the margin call after the collapse in the Aeroflot share price.

Meanwhile, just as Chelsea FC acted as a high-profile foreign investment insurance policy for Abramovich (which may now be past its use-by date), so the *Standard* could be useful to Lebedev, who – given the Kremlin's attitude to its oligarchs – could one day need a free press, get-out-of-jail card.

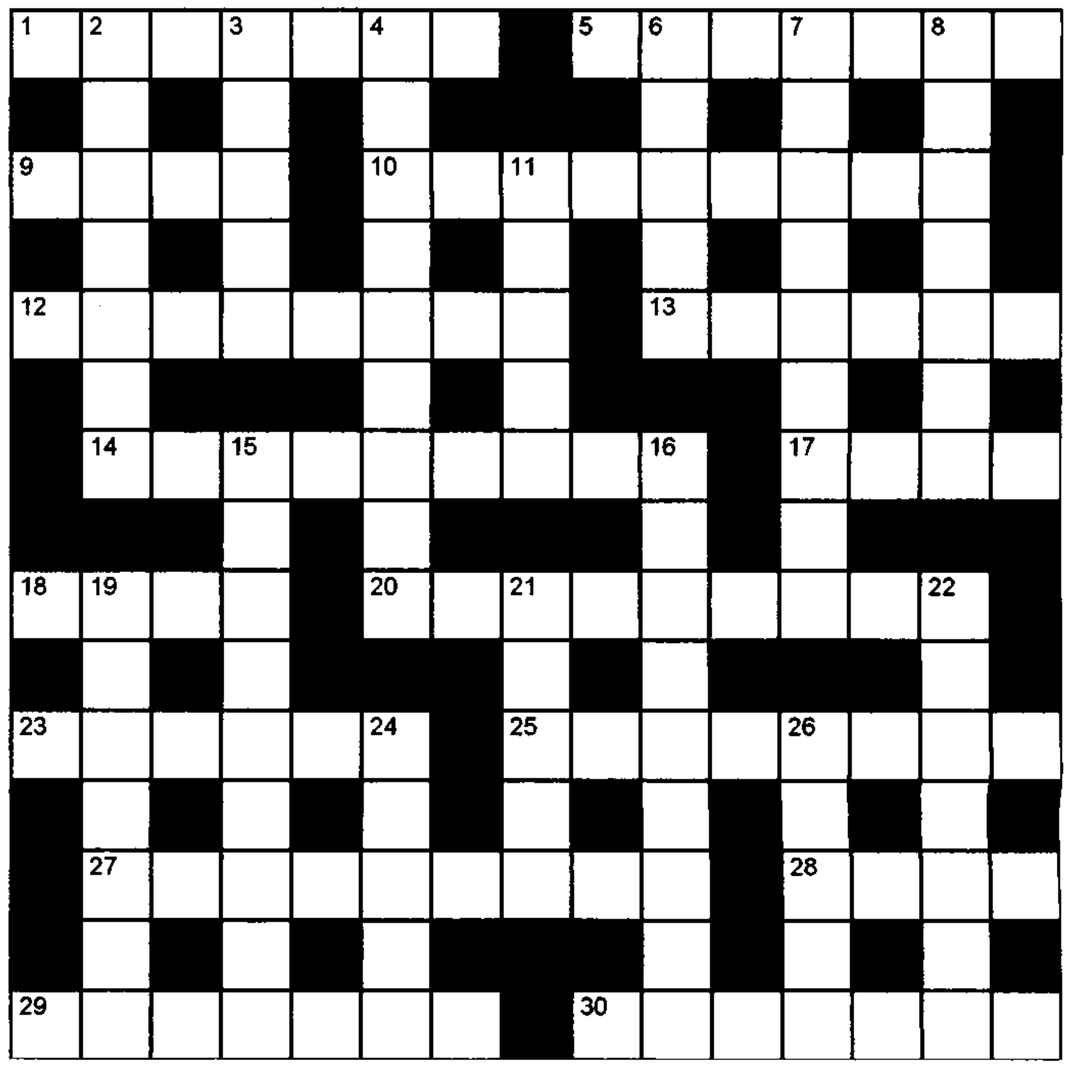
'Slicker'

EYE CROSSWORD 383

by Cyclops

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 30 January 2009

Entries to 'Crossword', Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1D 3BN or via email to crossword@private-eye.co.uk



ACROSS

1 The old record sex with 25% of aphrodisiacs – "helps one remember what a stiff one was like" (7)

5 State's in a bad way, embracing spending initially – pretend it's something else? (4,3)

9/21 Barack Obama ends with traumas, juggling a lot of different positions (4,5)

10 PM engineered mob rule on Tyneside? (9)

12 Go nuts with a bit of heavy breathing, cheeky! (8)

13 Escape the consequences of budget of fool at heart? (3,3)

14/25 Brown's apparent self-image wrecked by favourite howler – pointless sod! (7,2,3,5)

17 See 28ac.

18/26 As a careful sunbather pissed? (4-5)

20 Fruity thing, lippy imitation of a fart (9)

23 Sailor who's experienced a dose screwed good (3-3)

25 See 14ac.

27 Awkward situation: dish snuggled up to a Tory (not right wing) (3,6)

28/17 Shit raked over in *Hello*, possibly? It's a get-out (8)

29 Maybe co-ed gives "sex machine" brief amusement? (7)

30 Dicky died, say, getting screwed – not the best of times (3-4)

DOWN

2 Dick as well as Henry put inside (7)

3 Brown will need skill to be on the up in March (5)

4 Show by a sullen mistress of French leader (9)

6 In the thick of some cream on goolies (5)

7 Support for oil painting of Maggie, hatless, after uneasy rest (9)

8 Uptight friar left pissed outside entrance to urinal (7)

11 Dead against the end of Labour? Not now! (5)

15 David, *et al*, bonkers – that's confirmed! (9)

16 Accommodating shag, chain removed from watch – is deceived (6,3)

19 Observer's range of mags (sexy) (3-4)

21 See 9ac.

22 Cry "that hurt end of thingy!", being something of a coward? (7)

24 Member's area – Right gatecrashing to gain access (5)

26 See 18ac.

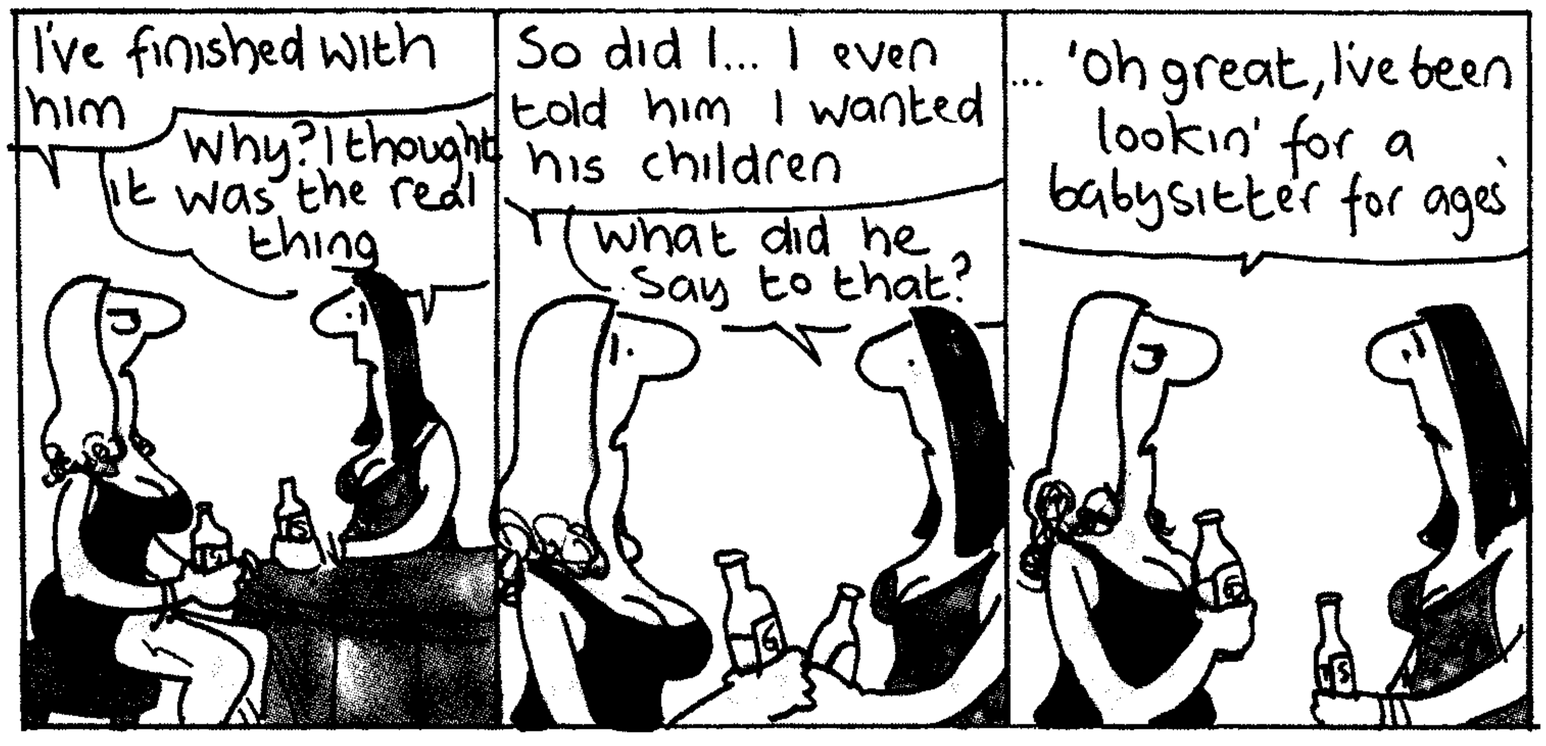
Crossword 382 winner: STEPHEN WHITLOCK

ACROSS: 1 Clot 4 Masturbate 9 Stolen 10 Approval 11 Flippant 12 Enemas 13/14 Love handles 17 Another 21/27 Blow-up doll 23 Objector 24 Episodic 25 Stiffy 26 Cross-party.

DOWN: 2 Let fly 3 Telephoto 4 Mandate 5/19A Smart move 6 Umpteen 7 Booze 8 Tear-arse 14/19 Her Majesty 15 Love child 16 Walloper 18 Hyped up 20 Woeful 22 Wasps 23 Oscar.

YOBETTES

HUSBAND


I've finished with him
Why? I thought it was the real thing
So did I... I even told him I wanted his children
What did he say to that?
... 'Oh great, I've been lookin' for a babysitter for ages'

Registered Charity No. 202918

Be Humankind

Oxfam

GoToMyPC: It's this easy.

GoToMyPC lets you instantly work on your office computer from any Internet connection, with complete access to your email, programs and files. The automatic setup takes just minutes, and there's no hardware needed. Just click and take your office with you wherever you go.

FREE 30-Day Trial

gotomypc.co.uk | promo code: private

GoToMyPC® by CITRIX®

Dan's autism made it hard for him to control his behaviour, but we kept working with him until he was more at peace with himself.

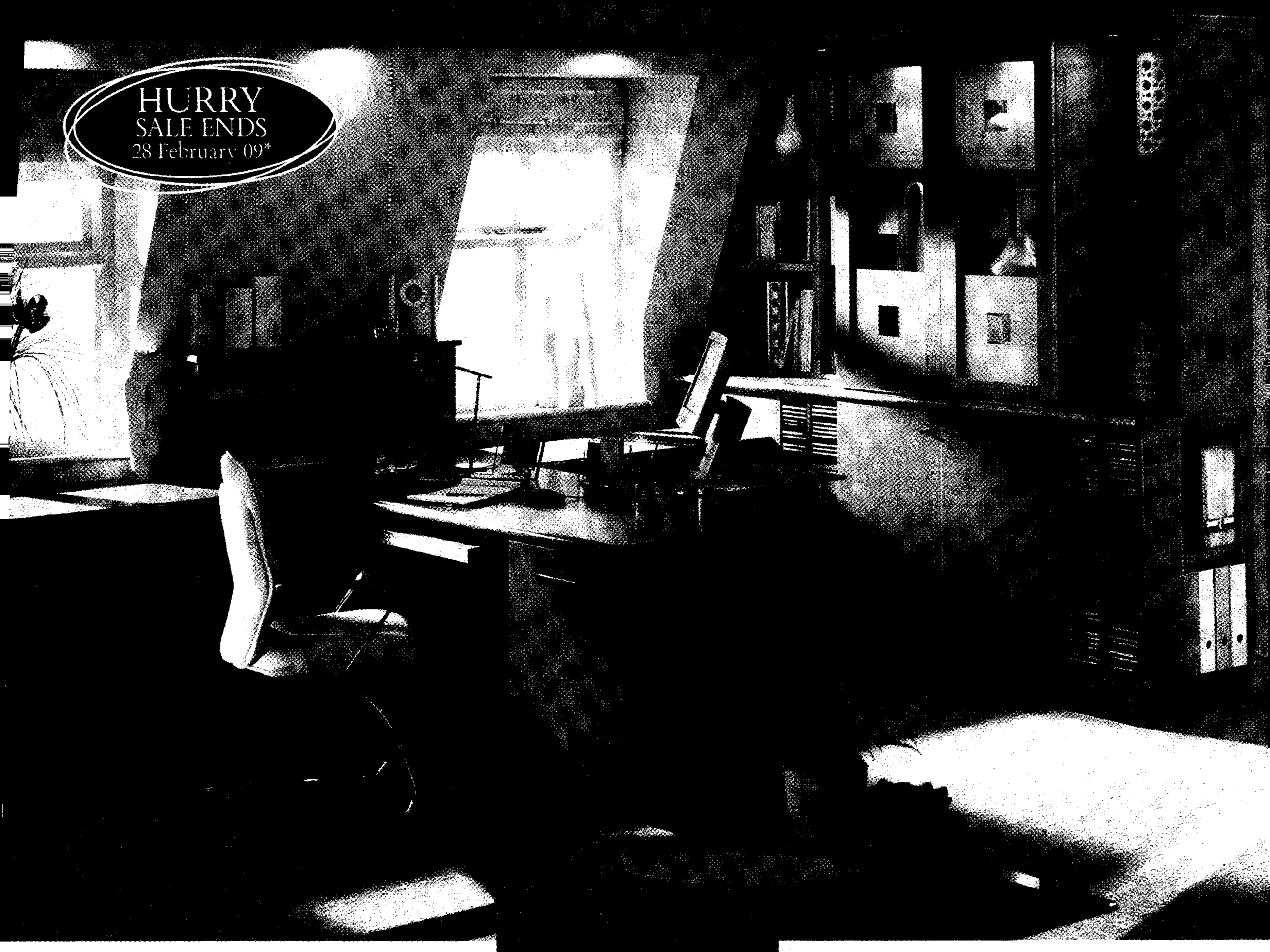
It's something we've been doing for 140 years, and today we give this long-term support to thousands of the UK's most vulnerable children and young people.

To find out more about Dan, and to find out how you can help transform a child's life, call or visit:

actionforchildren.org.uk

0300 123 2112

action for
children



design without compromise®

JANUARY SALE

Neville Johnson are delighted to announce that its January Sale is now on
WITH SUBSTANTIAL SAVINGS ON ALL FURNITURE UNTIL 28 FEBRUARY*

free 96 page brochure

bespoke design & craftsmanship

lifetime guarantee

free local design service

available throughout Europe

With substantial savings on all styles and finishes the Neville Johnson Sale provides the perfect opportunity to acquire the beautiful, handcrafted bespoke furniture you've always coveted. The ultimate home study, a dream bedroom, the home cinema you simply must have or the magnificent library you need for all your literary greats.

With our **FREE DESIGN SERVICE** and **SALE SAVINGS** what more could you ask for? Call today and one of our experienced designers will be more than happy to advise you, whatever stage your project is at.

www.nevillejohnson.co.uk/peye

*Terms & Conditions: To qualify for your sale discount you must place your order between 27/12/08 and 28/02/09. Minimum order value £3,000 +VAT. Sale excludes audio-visual equipment. Offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.

CALL TODAY FOR A FREE BROCHURE **0161 873 8333** QUOTE PEYE03 LINES OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

Alternatively, complete and return the coupon to the address below.

Mr/Mrs/Miss: Name: PEYE03

Address:

Postcode:

Tel: Email:

Please tick if you do not wish to receive information concerning other Neville Johnson products ☐

Neville Johnson Ltd, Broadoak Business Park, Ashburton Road West, Trafford Park, Manchester, M17 1RW. Fax: 0161 873 8335.

[redacted]®

design without compromise

STUDIES BEDROOMS LIBRARIES LOUNGES CINEMA DINING

Private Eye

Advertise here and reach over 796,000 potential customers, it's so easy!

(Source: NRS, June 2008)

There are three ways to place your advertisement

www.eyeadvertise.co.uk **tel: 020 7240 9129** **email: private-eye@tenalpspublishing.com**

£2.75 per word (£25 min charge). Centred box £15. Box number £15. For just £10 extra your ad can also appear on our website: **www.eyeadvertise.co.uk** All charges inc VAT

Would advertisers please note that copy deadline for February 6th issue will be 1pm, Tuesday, January 27th

Eye Art

JOHN MYATT-12 ORIGINAL PAINTINGS.INTERESTED? dlloyd2171@aol.com /07749392060

INTELLIGENT ARCHITECTURE www.murrayjohn.com

WELSH BORDER self-catering heaven. Nash-Hall.co.uk

Eye Wear

PUKKA PYJAMAS AND NIGHTSHIRTS for men, women and boys. www.pukkapyjamas.co.uk

Eye to Eye

Replying to a box number is as simple as sending a letter, just send your reply to Private Eye, Ten Alps Publishing, 9 Savoy Street, London, WC2E 7HR. Remember to quote on your envelope the box number to which you are replying..

LOVING LINKS. UK's leading discreet adult dating service since 1994. Unique top level one-to-one matching service and fast online email system. Call David for a chat on 08456 440 919.

KCDATING Age 35+ with no upper age limit Speed Dating events for Grown-Ups! LONDON (West End) Jan. 28 NORWICH Feb. 4 MANCHESTER Feb. 18 Online bookings at www.kcdating.co.uk 2009 is the year to find your soul mate with the help of KCDATING'S PRIVATE CLIENT MATCHMAKING ARRANGEMENTS! David Mintz, 'Matchmaker 'Extraordinaire' is currently available for individual bespoke consultations. We use traditional non – computerised pain staking 'Date Match' methods & will only introduce you to professional men/women you really do want to meet! To secure an appointment please telephone 01728 635064 or 07986 213120

PERSON TO PERSON – non-internet magazine for new friends/partners. Est. 1984: still going 'cos it works! Details (Dept PE), PO BOX 40, Minehead TA24 5YS. Tel: 01643 709509.

DON'T FORGET VALENTINE'S DAY

Call Katie on 020 7240 9129 to place your message in our Valentine's issue or go to www.eyeadvertise.co.uk

Successful entrepreneur, tall, nice looking, N/S, 55, seeks younger, slim lady for occasional fun, adventure and travel, in caring ltr. Photo and questions to 'another.chance1@googlemail.com'

THE COUNTRYSIDE DATING SITE: www.countrysidelove.co.uk

GOOD LOOKING emotionally available man,52,warm, sensual,cultured with dash of debonair,flair & wit. Seeks female counterpart for exclusive LTR. sjarvis806@aol.com

Gay guy, 36, attractive, educated, sociable, seeks older, active guy for country pursuits and city breaks. mneilsont@hotmail.com

ARMY OFFICER (single) 45-55,wanted by this very sensual,ultra feminine female,for LTR. Allwoman@mail.com

RAVEN haired beauty, 38,size 8.Very sporty,cultured, loves music,travel.Seeks life-time partner. Enquiries via jrh@rh-introductions.co.uk

Critical Friend/Housemate/Business Partner sought. Sex and fidelity optional. http://thebattlefieldoflove.blogspot.com/2008/12/domestic-partnership.html

TALL,SPORTY BLONDE, blue eyes,very pretty.Loves golf, travel,fine dining.WLTM successful male 45-52. Enquiries via jrh@rh-introductions.co.uk

Eye Novelties

Stuff your stockings @www.gizmoandwidget.com Shopping for fun

CONJURING CATALOGUE FREE. Hundreds of tricks. Beginner, professional. 0117 977 4334 www.magicbypost.com

Eye Escape

BRECKS HOTEL, BLACKPOOL. Budget accommodation from £20 pppn. Tel: 07960 763 619. breckshotel2005@btinternet.com

Newly restored farmhouse on the Umbrian/Tuscan border, sleeps ten, spectacular infinity pool, huge family room. Five hectares, wonderfully peaceful with views over two castles and the Niccone valley. 45 minutes from Perugia airport (Ryanair). Details and prices from matthewgould@yahoo.com

roundtheworldflights.com - Design your own RTW eg London - Dubai or Delhi or Tokyo - Bangkok surface Angkor Wat - Singapore - Borneo - Australia - New Zealand - The Cook Islands - USA - UK from £1199 including tax ATOL IATA or call 020 7704 5700 or visit us at 102 Islington High Street London

Luxury converted farmhouse in Abruzzo situated in stunning surroundings with breathtaking views of Gran Sasso mountains. sleeps 10, large pool. Beautiful beaches 35 mins drive.Explore this spectacular and undiscovered area of Italy. To rent visit www.myabruzzofarmhouse.co.uk. email: philipblacker.studio@virgin.net Phone 07850 426575.

Eye Business

CONNECTING SHOW BUSINESS WITH YOUR BUSINESS - Hire a comedy writer. www.associatedscripts.com

BREAK FREE RECORD'S LOOKING FOR INVESTORS. Looking to finance a video shoot and launch. We need to raise 10k 0191 4229126, 07828633076, bloomfieldandy@yahoo.co.uk

New Business and Income Opportunities inc. free offer www.truesure.biz

Entrepreneur with legitimate business in the USA, UK and South Africa is looking for anonymous silent investor(s). Good return on cash invested and flexible approach to benefits. Call Alex on 07789 011139 for chat or to arrange a meeting in strict confidence.

Presentable, approachable, award winning advertising photographer, thirty years experience, wishes to work himself out of debt. Call 07934693630.

Mandarin Chinese Tuition: Durham Graduate, London Zones1-6. Reasonable rates. Enquiries:- hugo@london.com Tel:-07825 737 083

INTERNATIONAL WEB DESIGN SERVICE Asia based cut your costs go direct www.manager@e-websolutions.org

Eye Law

HAVE YOU BEEN LET DOWN BY YOUR SOLICITORS OR DOES YOUR SOLICITOR LACK THAT CUTTING EDGE? Ahmud & Co. Solicitors, the lawyers that make a difference. www.ja-solicitors.com Tel: 020 8886 1111 or info@ja-solicitors.com No Legal Aid.

YES, you can now come direct to a barrister. Tel: 020 7833 9625.

FIND ANYBODY: www.locateperson.net Debt recovery – expert private investigation. Call +44 (0)121 247 5550 and 07773 788389.

Redundant Legal Secretary seeks work. London area. 07773 334949.

Divorced/Divorcing? Defend your assets/income. We fight your corner. Thirty years experience. Contact Divorce Dept, Pellmans, 1 Abbey Street, Eynsham, Oxford, OX29 4TB. Tel: 01865 884400 mail@pellmans.co.uk

THE 'NO WIN – NO FEE' Specialists: Professional Negligence (www.proneg.co.uk). Disputed Wills & Employment Law (www.sblaw.co.uk). Accident Claims (www.newdeal-fairdeal.co.uk). Free case assessment. Telephone: 0808 155 6389.

Eye Help

IT support for Numpties from an experienced pro who can help. From opening emails to building an online database. 07958574832

Artistic and political humanist male, slim,early sixties,lives Surrey summers but abroad winters, seeks curious female with hippy spirit but elegant appearance. Tel 077 650 40426

Eye Read

IN MEMORIAM CAMBRIDGE CENTRAL LIBRARY. A well-loved and highly-valued* friend. Died 20/1/07, sacrificed for the Arcade of Pricey* Consumerism. Promises of a Second Coming have regularly been broken; a truly Christian patience is required. *A cynic knows the price of everything and the value of nothing. (Oscar Wilde)

Eye Buy

ATTIC CLEARANCE? We buy early Oz, IT, Eye etcetera: underground@shoreditch.net

Eye Sell

FACTORY SURPLUS computers and notebooks, printers, digital cameras, DVD etc, etc. www.morgancomputers.co.uk or call 0870 126 4830.

OLD PERSIAN RUGS – mostly £100-£3000. Not a shop just a shed. DESMOND NORTH, East Peckham, Kent. TN12 5JB. Telephone 01622 871 353.

FORGET THE OSCARS, BAFTAS AND NOBELS. You'll find the real award winners are our unbelievably cheap flat screen TVs, hi-fi and home-cinema products! Call 0845 900 1230 for your nearest store or check out www.richersounds.com

www.londontransportoriginalsigns.co.uk For something truly evocative that will last a lifetime.

GO GREEN & BE SEEN Stylish and Modern reusable shopping bags www.ecoshoppingbags.co.uk

Lovecraftian Tales from the Table: Roleplay adventures in the world of Lovecraft. www.InnsmouthHouse.com

Learning a Language has just got easier. Fun to Use Fast Results www.languagewizard.co.uk

BRIGHTER BABIES' BOOK BASKETS The educated baby gift. www.brighterbabiesbookbaskets.co.uk

For semi display advertising call Robert Grant on 020 7878 2308

To book your advert online go to www.eyeadvertise.co.uk

Eye Need

TIFFIN BOYS' CHOIR education/outreach trip to New Zealand needs urgent sponsorship - www.justgiving.com/FOTM or please send any donations to: Friends of Tiffin Music, c/o Tiffin School, Qn Elizabeth Rd, Kingston, KT2 6RL (cheques payable to FOTM/Friends of Tiffin Music). For more info contact the Music Dept 020 8546 4638. THANK YOU

Just made redundant, baby due, Please help. Lloyds 30-99-29 12374468

Please help an antiquarian bookshop survive credit crunch 119100 01057770

50k needed urgently. Any work undertaken. Discretion assured. essexmale@blueyonder.co.uk

Couple needing help with IVF cycles, any donation welcome 404311 41472216

Need to borrow 75k over 10 years to consolidate debts at 8%pa interest. Use your lawyer to create agreement. Excellent credit record. Further details mjp1970@live.co.uk

Absolutely dry ambient musician seeks legal fund to fend off aggressive vodka company who want to stop me using my absolutely ambient name. 100% genuine . 20 12 80 20613282

Girlfriend wants breast reduction. Desperately need £5000 for hand enlargement operation. SC987654 AC98765432

Help teenager achieve dream Nepal trip to work on community project. Details: ProjectNepal2010@googlemail.com

Desperate ex-seminarian needs £3000 for debts. Natwest SC=51-70-32 AC=40416674

DEBT MONKEY, reduced to performing tricks for clicks at www.debtmonkey.tv - please help!

eurosceptic? want to take action? we have a plan for 2009 but need funding cogent legal and ethical contact adeester@ hotmail.com

To place an advertisement in the classified pages of Private Eye call 020 7240 9129

Eye Services

PRIVATE LONDON CLINIC: (Moorgate/Old Street tubes) offers walk-in and postal sexual health services, online impotence treatment. Open evenings. Tel: 020 7490 8988. www.DrThom.com

REMOVALS AND STORAGE: UK and European. www.bayesofhampstead.co.uk Tel: 020 7435 3694.

FIND ANYBODY: www.locateperson.net – James Black LL.B(Hons) expert private investigation, international +44 (0) 121 247 5550 and 07773 788389.

SPEECH LOOMING? Relax, I'll write it for you! You're due to speak at a wedding / dinner / event. Don't waste time worrying. Lawrence: 07970 046 230 or www.greatspeechwriting.co.uk

STOP THE BUGGERS Professional Security Sweeps www.stopthebuggers.com Email : info@buggers.com Tel : 01342 719361

SLIDES/NEGATIVES onto CD/DVD. Digital photo restoration. Friendly, efficient service. www.digitiseyourphotos.co.uk

WWW.Tracingpeople.net info@tracingpeople.net Tel :- 01342 719361 Fax :- 01342 719641

How to get a Diplomatic Passport - www.diplomaticpassport.com

I CAN WRITE IT 4U: Letters, speeches,eulogies, announcements, presentations, written for any purpose by pro with a great soh. Sports writer,, CBI, John Cleese movies, BBC etc. email andrewjsargent@btinternet.com or call 07920 772545PE1.

A DREAM JOB?

It probably will be if you are an educated, mature (our current guides are aged from 40 to 70), resourceful and people-oriented communicator who can put others first and would enjoy showing tourists around the UK, Ireland and Northern Europe. If you are based near Manchester, Dublin, Belfast, Cardiff, Bristol, Glasgow, London, N. Wales or Lille/Ypres, we'd especially like to hear from you but your residential location is not necessarily a problem.

You'd be retained seasonably on a self-employed basis as a Driver-Guide, taking parties of up to 14 in number in one of our Mercedes mini-coaches on unique and memorable holidays. See what we do at

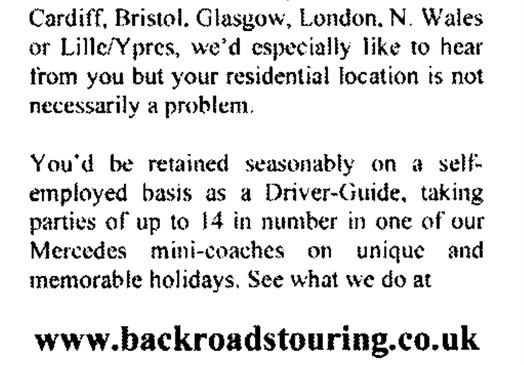
www.backroadstouring.co.uk

A PCV class D1 driving licence is required but subsidised driver-training courses are run to assist you to obtain this if needed.

Further details: Send your CV to info@backroadstouring.co.uk

Got CDs?

The Brennan is a new kind of CD player that holds 2,500 CDs. Find anything in seconds, no clutter, dead easy, great fun.



From £299

www.3ga.org.uk
Or call **01638 615117**
Quote eye for free delivery

www.redmolotov.com
I'm the one the Daily Mail warned you about.
DARWIN
I WARNED YOU THAT THIS WOULD HAPPEN
SUPPORT OUR TROOPS
3-FOR-2 SALE ON ALL T-SHIRTS IN JANUARY. www.redmolotov.com

Silver Tongue
Your own
SPEECHWRITER
social – political – business
Call Milton On 07909 900449
or email
milton@miltonfirman.co.uk

Lost out due to bad advice?
Why don't you sue your accountant/solicitor /surveyor?
Contact: GORVINS on 0800 015 9986 or email enquiries@gorvins.com

For semi display advertising call Ian Mehrer on 020 7878 2366

Gala Concert
TIFFIN BOYS' CHOIR
SIMON TOYNE DIRECTOR
GAVIN ROBERTS ORGAN
Rejoice in the Lamb (Britten), *Chichester Psalms* (Bernstein), and works by Byrd, Stanford, Tallis, Tavener and Tippett

SAT 7 FEB 2009, 7.30pm
TEMPLE CHURCH LONDON EC4
TICKETS £15 / £10 (CONCS) 020 8255 8600
shop@tiffin.kingston.sch.uk

BINDERS

Keep your PRIVATE EYE collection clean and tidy with our smart, dark blue binders – now with a new spine fitting for easier use.

Each binder holds 26 issues (a year's worth)

Price £10 (inc. p&p). For overseas orders please add £1 per binder.

ORDER ONLINE AT: **www.private-eye.co.uk**
CALL: **01795 414 870** for credit card orders or further information

Or complete this order form and send with your payment to:
PRIVATE EYE BINDERS, PO Box 326, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8FA.

No of binders_____ I enclose a cheque for £ _____ payable to Private Eye.

OR please charge MasterCard/Visa/Switch (Issue no_____) Expiry date_____

Card number

Title Initial Surname

Address

Postcode

Telephone (in case we have a query with your order)

Email

☐ Yes, please keep me up to date with details of other products and services from Private Eye that may be of interest to me.

Each week at least 8 'fit and healthy' young people in the UK die of undiagnosed heart conditions.

Cardiac Risk in the Young (CRY) is a charity that offers help and support to families who have suffered a loss, funds medical research and works with cardiologists and family doctors.

CRY aims to promote and protect the cardiac health of our young by establishing good practice and screening facilities devoted to reducing the frequency of sudden cardiac death.

Cardiac Risk *in the* Young

Tel: 01737 363222 e-mail: cry@c-r-y.org.uk www.c-r-y.org.uk

Charity No.1050845

Have you got room to express yourself?

garden retreat or simply more space to work or relax.

T: 01949 860 482
E: info@garden-studios.com

garden studios

www.garden-studios.com

Masterclass in Investigative Reporting

David Leigh, investigations editor of The Guardian and professor of reporting at City University, London; and **Nick Davies**, special correspondent of The Guardian and author of Flat Earth News, present the One-Day Masterclass in Investigative Reporting.

Saturday February 21st 2009
10am to 6pm
City University London

with a free bar to follow
Prices:
for most people: £125
students: £25

A masterclass for anyone who ever wanted to know how to bring down a government with a notebook.

Two of Britain's most experienced investigative reporters join forces to tell the tales and teach the tricks of their trade – for student journalists and veteran reporters; print and broadcast; local and national; media lawyers, teachers and academics.

Techniques including ● Finding stories ● Handling human sources ● Dealing with legal problems ● Exploiting the public domain ● Using the Freedom of Information Act ● Working with whistleblowers ● Answering ethical questions ● Dealing with leaks inquiries ● Undercover work

For booking and information go to:
www.reportermasterclass.co.uk
or contact the masterclass administrator Catriona Shepard,
on 07812 571 870
101 Valence Road,
Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1SJ

To book your advert online go to **www.eyeadvertise.co.uk**

OM SAI RAM

Even The Price Suits You, Sir!

Every dedicated suit-wearer knows that Hong Kong's master tailors have an enviable reputation for quality, efficiency and price.

The only not-inconsiderable snag is that they are ordinarily in Hong Kong whereas most of us ordinarily are not. But seekers after the finest Hong Kong tailoring need worry no longer. let us introduce Mr ***Raja M. Daswani***, master craftsman, of Cameron Road, Kowloon and Hong Kong's finest and most respected men's tailor.

Mr Daswani and his family team measure and make hundreds of suits a week for discerning clients from all over the world. Best of all, in tune with these globalised times, he and his team at Raja Fashions are now taking on the world.

Yes, ***Raja M. Daswani***'s sartorial missionaries to the badly dressed and overpaying British customer is now bringing him to the UK as often as once a month.

On each visit, Team Daswani takes over hotel suites in all Britain's major cities, so any of us can make an appointment and get the full Hong Kong Monty practically without leaving home.

The measurements are done by Mr Raja and his men here and emailed to Hong Kong along with a series of digital photos of you from every angle. Often, your suit will be started on by a tailor 6,000 miles away before you've even left the hotel.

You can then have it sent by courier within a week or so if it's urgent-or wait for a second fitting when the Raja team hits your town again a few weeks later.

It is often said that British clothing chains 'have much to fear from Mr. Daswani'. His dedication to men's suiting borders on the fanatical. And both his company's quality and pricing are truly shocking - in the pleasantest possible way for customers, if not for Mr Daswani's competition over here.

We are talking £19 (£29 including tax and duty) for a custom-made shirt, £129 (£169 inclusive) for a fully-lined, made-to-measure suit in a lightweight wool or linen, to £250 (£325 inclusive) for a 100 per cent wool, entirely hand-finished suit in a British cloth, with every refinement from hand-made buttonholes to knee lining and double thickness pockets.

Even the most expensive possible Raja Daswani suit, made in deluxe cashmere wool for £2,500 comes in at something like a third of the price of the Saville Row equivalent.

The Tailor King Of Hong Kong Comes to the UK

In other words, customers can now buy two bespoke, custom cut and hand-stitched suits, made from fine, British or Italian cloth and measured by a master tailor for the price of one off-the-peg, chain store suit cut by a computer out of cheap fabric and sold to you by a gentleman with spiky gelled hair and who wouldn't know a side vent or a notch lapel from a PlayStation.

Indeed, making an appointment with Raja Daswani's team is almost the archetypal no-brainer. Why would any British lover of the classic men's suit NOT?

The Raja revolution, with its inspired mix artistic flair, entrepreneurial genius and digital technology may well see the end of the traditional - ie, cheap-looking - off the peg British chain store suit.

It would be a fitting end to a too-often ill-fitting icon.

Business hours 10am - 8pm
(by appointment only)
email: raja@raja-fashions.com
Mobile: 07786 543258
Tel: 0163 557 4233
Website: www.raja-fashions.com

CUSTOM MADE BESPOKE SUIT CLOTH BY ERMENEGILDO ZEGNA

BEFORE ~~£1,500~~ **NOW £750**

RAJA FASHIONS
Main Shop: 34C Cameron Road, Ground Floor, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
Tel:(852) 2366 7624 Fax:(852) 23692807

London	**Sheraton Park Tower**	**Brighton**	**Hilton Brighton Metropole Hotel**	**Leeds**	**Leeds City Hilton**
Jan 28-Feb 1	101 Knightsbridge, SW1X 7RN	Feb 3-4	Kings Road, East Sussex, BN1 2FU	Feb 7-8	Neville Street Leeds, LS1 4BX
London	**Novotel London Tower Bridge**	**Bristol**	**Bristol Marriott Hotel**	**Manchester**	**Renaissance Manchester Hotel**
Feb 2-3	10 Pepys Street, EC3N 2NR	Feb 13-14	2 Lower Castle Street, BS1 3AD	Feb 5-6	Blackfriars Street, M3 2EQ
London	**Four Seasons Hotel**	**Cambridge**	**Royal Cambridge Hotel**	**Newcastle**	**Hilton Newcastle Gateshead**
Feb 4-5	46 Westferry Circus, E14 8RS	Feb 1-2	Trumpington Street, CB2 1PY	Feb 9-10	Bottle Bank, NE8 2AR
London	**Hilton Paddington Hotel**	**Cardiff**	**Cardiff Hilton Hotel**	**Northampton**	**Northampton Marriott**
Feb 6-9	146 Praed Street, W2 1EE	Feb 11-12	Kingsway, Cardiff, CF10 3HH	Feb 1-2	Eagle Drive, NN4 7HW
London	**Hilton London Tower Bridge**	**Edinburgh**	**George Hotel**	**Norwich**	**Marriott Sprowton Manor Hotel**
Feb 10-11	5 More London Place, SE1 2BY	Feb 15-16	19-21 George Street, EH2 2PB	Jan 30-31	Wroxham Road, NR7 8RP
London	**Hilton On Park Lane**	**Exeter**	**Thistle Exeter**	**Oxford**	**Old Bank Hotel**
Feb 12-13	22 Park Lane, W1K 1BE	Feb 9-10	Queen Street, Devon EX4 3SP	Feb 15-16	92-94 High Street, OX1 4BA
Aberdeen	**Thistle Aberdeen Caledonian**	**Glasgow**	**Hilton Glasgow**	**Reading**	**Penta Hotel**
Feb 17-18	10-14 Union Terrace, AB10 1WE	Feb 13-14	1 William Street, G3 8HT	Jan 30-31	Oxford Road, RG1 7RH
Birmingham	**Hyatt Regency Birmingham**	**Heathrow**	**Sheraton Heathrow**	**Southampton**	**Hilton Southampton**
Feb 3-4	2 Bridge Street, B1 2JZ	Feb 14-15	Heathrow Airport, UB7 0HJ	Feb 6-7	Bracken Place, SO16 3RB

Details of our up and coming tours can be found on www.raja-fashions.com

Long-term global investments.
This ISA offers a simple way in.

Scottish Mortgage Investment Trust PLC

Your low cost choice for global investment

Scottish Mortgage is an investment trust that makes long-term investments in global companies. We search all over the world for businesses with above average returns. The result? A diversified, global portfolio, which offers you the potential for long-term growth.

To make things simple, you can invest in Scottish Mortgage through our Investment Trust ISA from just £100 a month or a £2,000 lump sum. Please remember that the value of your investment and any income from it can go down as well as up and you may not get back the amount invested.

Investments can be affected by changing stock market conditions and currency exchange rates.

To find out more about investing in Scottish Mortgage through the Baillie Gifford Investment Trust ISA, visit **www.scottishmortgageit.com** or phone **0800 027 5227**. You can also apply for an ISA online at **www.bailliegifford.com/oms**

BAILLIE GIFFORD

Managing investment trusts since 1909

We may record your call. Baillie Gifford Savings Management (BGSM) is the manager of the Baillie Gifford Investment Trust ISA and is wholly owned by Baillie Gifford & Co, which is the manager and secretary of the Scottish Mortgage Investment Trust PLC. Your personal data is held and used by BGSM in accordance with data protection legislation. We may use your information to send you information about Baillie Gifford products, funds or special offers and to contact you for business research purposes. We will only disclose your information to other companies within the Baillie Gifford group and to agents appointed by us for these purposes. You can withdraw your consent to receiving further marketing communications from us and to being contacted for business research purposes at any time. You also have the right to review and amend your data at any time.

9 770032 888129 03 >

PE/SM